



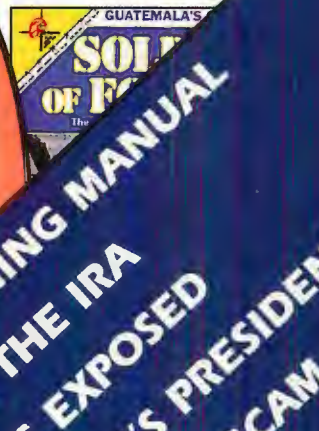
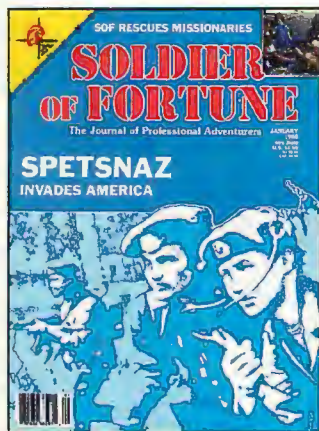
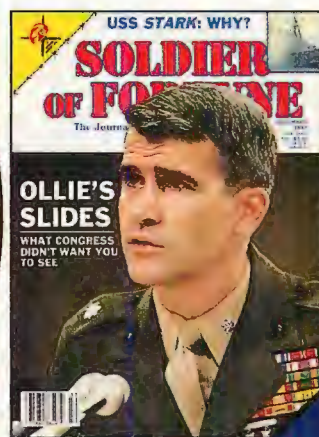
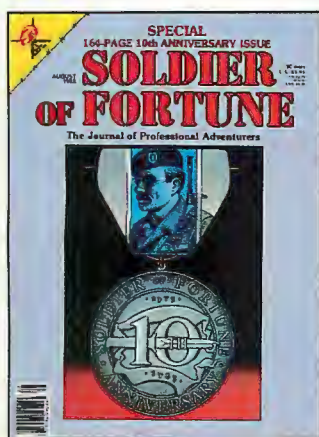
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by Robert K. Brown

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WAY, way back in the summer of 1975, when the first issue of my idea for a magazine hit the newsstands, my friend and military affairs editor, Alexander McColl, penned some words for our first few thousand readers:

"For our brave comrades fallen in battle in Vietnam and for the tens of millions of innocent civilians betrayed by our country, let us bow our heads in sorrow ... Now is a time for mourning, but also a time for faith.

"Faith in what? Faith in the righteousness of our cause, that is, faith that individual liberty and dignity, and the right even of small, poorly defended countries to live without fear or conquest, are not only morally right, but worthy of a personal commitment that includes taking on the risk of death in battle."

For 16 years, mainstream media and others who believe everything they hear or read have twisted those words, my own words, and almost everything I have published, and tried to make my magazine out to be something of a "journal of right-wing whackos."

But isn't it funny how times change. Just recently, the Soviet Union, the "Evil Empire" (words ridiculed by every self-respecting liberal when Reagan uttered them), has, to some extent, admitted its butcherous ways, and is currently on its way to the political and economic sewer.

The ideas that forced the Tiananmen Square massacre will live on, if not in the minds of the thousands of mowed-down kids with their home-made statue of liberty, then in the

memories of the next generation of Chinese leadership.

"Worker's paradises" and "people's republics" all around the world are being exposed as the worker's hells and people's nightmares some "right-wing" Americans always knew they were.

These days, especially after Desert Storm, virtually every news magazine and every nightly news broadcast in our country wants to have "been there," wants to have been pro-liberty in all of the various global battles, on the front lines and in the trenches supporting freedom fighters everywhere.

The problem is: they weren't.

Soldier of Fortune

was. SOF was there for the Vietnam vets. SOF was there in Grenada. SOF was there in Panama. SOF was there in the Persian Gulf. SOF was there in the "poorly defended countries" with people battling for "individual liberty and dignity" in distant war zones all around the world.

And we still are there. But there are many battles for liberty yet to be won — not just overseas, but here at home, as with gun control.

If you're reading these words, and know what we're about, I want to say: Congratulations — you were right all along — and the media idiots who told you that supporting our "right-wing" ideas of freedom was "extreme," are slowly, but unquestionably, beginning to feel a little stupid these days.

I wish you well as you join me in celebrating *Soldier of Fortune's* 16th Anniversary and the "righteousness of our cause." ✕



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Photo: Patrick O'Donnell

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ONLY THE PHONY Susan Katz Keating
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U.S. ARMY SPECIAL FORCES CACHING MANUAL
 In this era of government control and confiscation, we often find Big Brother looking over our shoulders and deciding what we can — and can't — own. Gun owners have already been hard hit — and it's going to get worse. What can we do to protect our rights under the Constitution? In the words of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.: "One has not only a legal but a moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws," and that's why we're reprinting in its entirety the U.S. Army Special Forces Caching Manual — a helpful primer on caching what you don't want government to confiscate **113**

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COVER

Congratulations! You're holding the finest combat reporting/action-adventure journal in the world in your hands — but most of you know that already. A bit egotistical on our part? Perhaps, but we happen to believe it. For 16 years we've covered war's free-fire zones anywhere and everywhere, and we're not too humble to say that our combat reports are the best you'll read in any publication — bar none. Why? Because our staff and correspondents have sat in the trenches and dodged bullets from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, and then brought back the reality — and brutality — of war to these pages. First and foremost, that's what we do: report combat with an experienced eye. Not everyone's interested in that kind of truth. Not everyone cares to *know* the truth. But some — like you — do. That's why Soldier of Fortune Magazine has been in business for the last 16 years. That's why you're holding our 16th Anniversary Issue in your hands. And that's why we'll be in business for the next 16 years — because some of us care about the truth.

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GLP

CLAYTON YEUTTER
CHAIRMAN
REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE

Dear Friend,

Several weeks back, you received a personal invitation to join the Republican National Committee as a new Sustaining Member.

Though I haven't heard from you, I'm so eager to include you as a Member of our team I am writing you once more -- to help us build the most successful Republican victory in decades.

Why am I so persistent? Let me answer by asking you two critical questions.

FEED THE HAND THAT BITES? ...

Bob Brown, our fearless leader here at SOF, has been getting mail from the Republican National Committee soliciting funds. Gosh, the last letter sounded as though they were downright lonely he hadn't responded.

But not as lonely as American gun owners felt when they were essentially abandoned by the Republican Party in fighting the Brady — and other — gun-grab bills.

We've been getting mail from other Republicans who have returned the solicitation letter they got, with a polite note stating that because of the lack of support the Second Amendment has received from Republicans, these folks were sending *their* political budget to the NRA Institute for Legislative Action, and would continue to do so until the Republican Party straightened up its act.

Not a bad idea ...

APPEALS COURT FRIES CHRISTIC CRITTERS ...

Anyone who has stood in line at the supermarket knows that for a buck you can get a tabloid filled with the *real truth* about extraterrestrials, Harmonic Convergence, and uncountable

whacko conspiracy theories involving Elvis and the CIA. Well, here's one "theory" that cost good, loyal Americans millions to discredit! Finally, it's payback time.

The Christics and radical left-wing journalists Tony and Martha Honey sued Generals John K. Singlaub and Richard Secord, ex-CIA Deputy Director Ted Shackley and 26 others (including the Medellin Cartel), alleging that these rogue intelligence officers were responsible for: the Vietnam War, the Bay of Pigs invasion, countless drugs-for-guns gigs, and even a bombing in Nicaragua.

This federal suit alleged that these men were a "secret team" responsible for just about everything wrong in America. The Christics invited Americans by the thousands to contribute to their crusade. This provided a nice living for the Christics, an alleged religious-legal order. A good number contributed — they raised \$9 million dollars.

In June 1988, Judge King of Miami threw the case out of court and awarded the defendants \$1.2 million in costs. The Christics, along with singers Jackson Browne, Crosby, Stills and Nash, and countless Hollywood types,

embarked on a wild campaign to raise more money for an appeal and to bash Judge King, claiming that he had become a secret member of the secret team.

The appeals court was not impressed. On 18 June, it held that Judge King was right on target in exposing the Christics as fabricators of evidence, deceptive, and downright bad critters. The court said there was never any evidence of anything the defendants did wrong. Pay up, Christics, it ruled.

Now the Christics are claiming that the appeals court is also part of the campaign to keep the "truth" from the American people. And they sent out another fund-raising letter and plan more Christic rock concerts to raise more money for another court appeal. Their new campaign: to expose the "secret team" and conspiracy that they allege held back the Iran hostages so as to defeat Jimmy Carter.

Incidentally, the Christics are tax-exempt, courtesy of the IRS. Which makes all us taxpayers, we would guess, unwitting members of *their* "secret team."

DEBLIN RENT-A-MiG ...

The Poles, left with a good supply of MiG-21 "Fishbed" fighters, are renting them out to qualified Western pilots looking for the next horizon. For \$2,000, a group of Polish flyers from Deblin flying school will give you an hour at the controls of a MiG-21. On a budget? Then fly a MiG-15 for only \$1,128 an hour, or a TS-11 jet trainer for \$712, an Mi-2 chopper for \$495, or an Antonov transport for \$345. Work for SOF? Perhaps we can interest you in a flight in a Polish hot air balloon for \$85.

ANOTHER CONTRA OFFICIAL SLAIN BY GUNMEN ...

A pair of gunmen shot down the former finance chief of the Nicaraguan contras, Honduran officials announced. Francisco Ruis Castellanos, whose *nom de guerre* was Commander Renata, was the second contra shot to death this year. Military Commander Enrique Bermudez was gunned down in Managua, Nicaragua, on 16 February.



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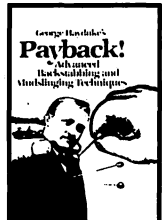
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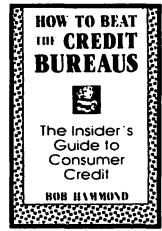
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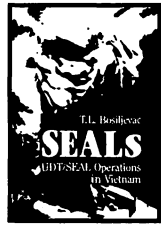
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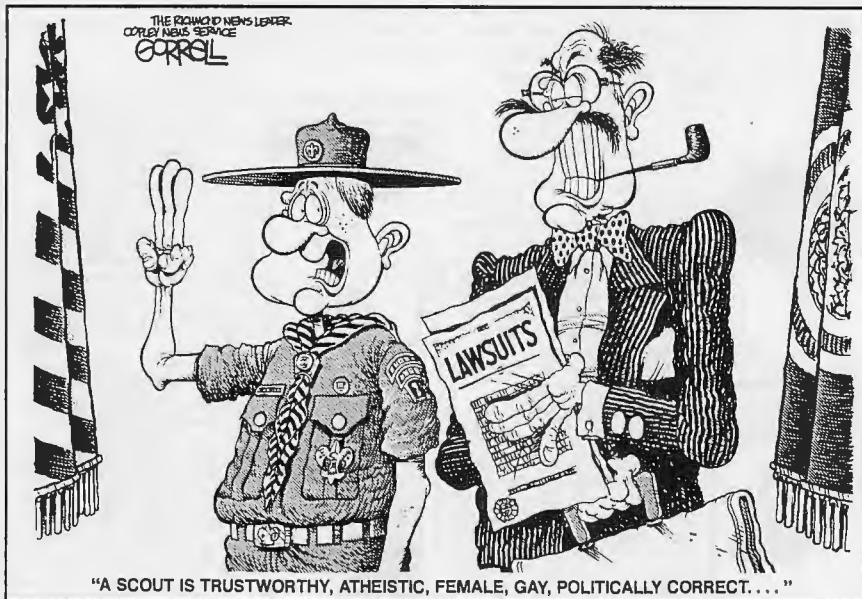
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them "from point of capture to grave." More than 20 Western journalists disappeared during the Vietnam War, and are thought to have been executed by the Khmer Rouge as "CIA agents." (Thanks to Jim Gregory of POW Freedom Foundation for this info.)

AMERICAN WORLD WAR II ORPHANS NETWORK ...

People working for this network are searching for the sons and daughters of soldiers who were killed or missing in World War II. They also hope to locate every memorial across the United States that lists WWII veterans. Contact them at: Box 4369, Bellingham, WA 98227; phone (206) 733-1678. ✉

VIETNAM VETS LOCATOR ...

Vietnam Vets International Locator would like your name for its on-line buddy- search computer list. They also need your address, phone, rank, nickname, dates in-country and unit. Call or fax (213) 540-0428, or write Vietnam War Library, Dept. SOF, 1300 South P.C.H. #101, Redondo, CA 90277-5093.

HOOKED ON SNIPING? ...

If you were a combat sniper in the Rangers, SEALs or Marine Corps, an author doing research for a book on the psychology of sniping would like to talk to you. Contact Marilyn Kinsman, 11502-71 Ave., Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T6G-0A7.

SAINTS PRESERVE US ...

John M. Snyder, public affairs director for the Citizens Committee for the Right to Keep and Bear Arms, and a former Jesuit seminarian, is promoting the designation of Saint Gabriel Pos-

senti as "patron of handgunners."

Canonized in 1920, St. Possenti was born in Italy in 1859, and after a raucous childhood, entered a Passionist monastery, and while there, had occasion to single-handedly save the village of Isola from a band of 20 armed renegades using a pistol.

PRIVATE BENJI? ...

The National War Dogs Memorial Project, Box 6907, Jacksonville, FL 32236, will issue your favorite dog enlistment papers (\$3 for a private, up to \$300 for a general). Funds are to be used to further the memorial that honors some of the most faithful soldiers Uncle Sam ever drafted. Details available from NWDMP at the above address. Get one for your brother-in-law or favorite staff NCO.

STONE/FLYNN GRAVE BELIEVED FOUND ...

A team from British Granada Television went to Cambodia last year to investigate CIA reports about the execution of journalists Dana Stone and Sean Flynn, son of actor Errol Flynn, after their capture in 1970 along the Vietnamese-Cambodian border (see "What Happened to Sean Flynn?," SOF, January '91).

Veteran Indochina reporter Tim Page, a former colleague and friend of Stone and Flynn, accompanied the British group in their investigation, and reported they had managed to trace

JIM TURNEY, 1950-1991 ...

On 11 June 1991, Jim Turney, a long-time friend and supporter of SOF and the cause of freedom in Central America, died in Collierville, Tennessee. He was born at Dyess, Arkansas, and was wounded while serving with the Marine Corps in Vietnam.

Jim was the founder and a very active member of Civilian Military Assistance (CMA), and later revived the Phantom Division, transforming it into another active and effective organization supporting the contras in Nicaragua. Between them, CMA and the Phantom Division were responsible for collecting and forwarding large quantities of boots, uniforms and load-bearing equipment for the contras' "northern front," and also sent numerous training teams to support that effort, essentially all of it paid for with their own after-tax dollars. Their efforts were a major part of the "private sector" contributions to freedom in Central America.

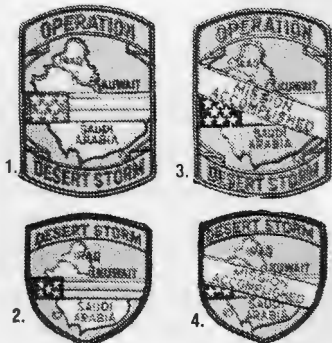
Jim was buried with military honors on 14 June 1991 at the National Cemetery in Nashville. His bulky frame and smiling face will be greatly missed at SOF conventions, where he was a regular.



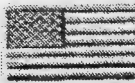
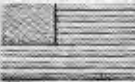


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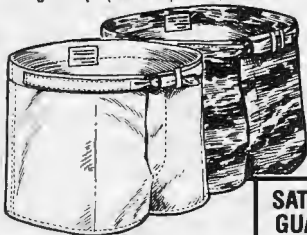
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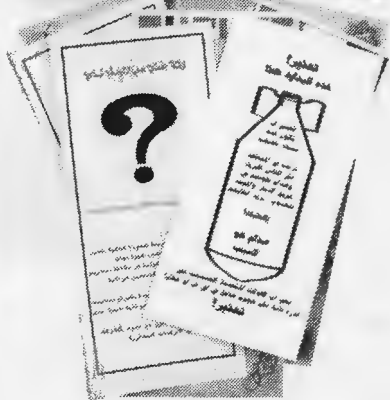


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Read for yourself the powerful, psychologically compelling arguments that convinced tens of thousands of Iraqi troops to lay down their arms rather than fight!!

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FASCISTS FOR PETTING FARMS ...

"Under my new proposal, the Steinback Gun Control Initiative, all handgun owners would be licensed after a thorough background check, and possession of a handgun by an unlicensed person would be a felony ... The government would be tightly in control of the manufacture, importation and assembly of all handguns and handgun parts, and government outlets would be the only legitimate vendors of bullets and guns. Also, permits to carry guns outside of the home would be extremely limited ... AND, I DON'T BELIEVE MY PROPOSAL VIOLATES ANY ASPECT OF THE SECOND AMENDMENT."

R. Steinback, syndicated columnist; column submitted by Joe Rojas II, Hollywood, Florida

Instead of replying to this wanna-be Big Brother's drivell ourselves, SOF decided to let some other pro-gun types do the talking:

"The strongest reason for the people to retain the right to keep and bear arms is, as a last resort, to protect themselves against tyranny in government." — Thomas Jefferson

"The Constitution shall never be construed to prevent the people of the United States from keeping arms." — Samuel Adams

"Firearms stand next in importance to the Constitution itself. They are the American people's liberty, teeth and keystone under independence. The rifle and pistol are indispensable and they deserve a place of honor with all that is good. When firearms go, all goes. We need them every hour." — George Washington

"The advantage of being armed, which the Americans possess over the people of other countries, as in Europe, (shows that other) governments are afraid to trust their people with arms." — James Madison

"Arms in the hands of citizens may be used at individual discretion in



nice boys! You fought for freedom and justice, this real great and hard work. USA — Symbol of Freedom! Latterly of my letter, I wish you large health and strength, big love, many-many money, good friends and long, happy life!

"Soviet Water Dog" Konnov
Volgograd, USSR

CHANGING MINDS ...

I never thought I would ever read SOF, let alone write to you. I have always dismissed your magazine as something for wanna-be Rambos. However, a colleague of mine left the July issue of SOF on my desk, thinking that I, as a full-blooded Chippewa Indian, would find the FLAK letter from the "Navajo Warrior" interesting.

I not only found the letter interesting, I found the entire magazine a paragon of outstanding military journalism. The next time this "jarhead" deploys overseas, you can be damn sure that SOF magazine will be there with him.

Major Jerome T. Ellis, USMC
Hayward, California

"WE SHALL (NOT) OVERCOME" ...

I have read with interest letters about Northern Ireland mainly from

private self-defense." — John Adams

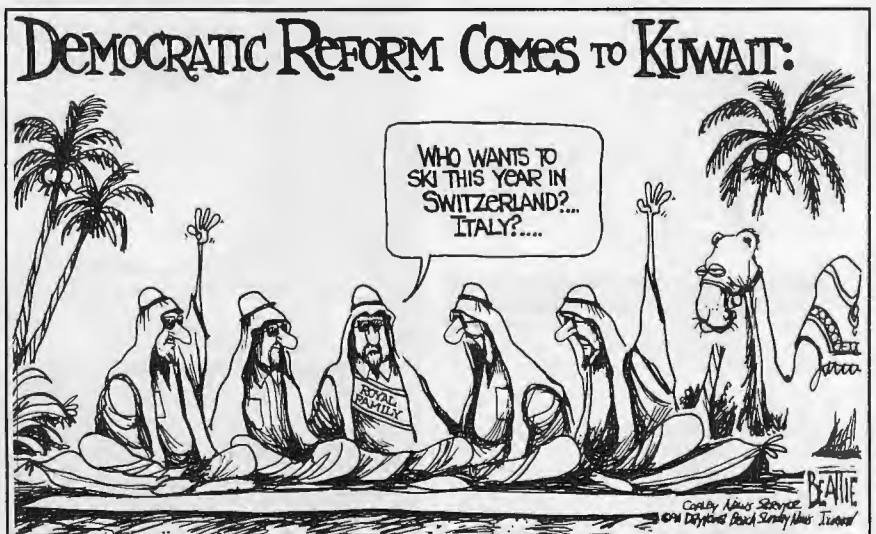
As a courtesy to this country's Founding Fathers, Mr. Steinback, SOF cordially invites you to take your gun control initiative, bend over, and stick it up your ass.

FROM RUSSIA WITH SMILES ...

I very happy that now for first time I read your nice SOF magazine. This well done! Very interesting and needed thing.

I come home after three years' service in Soviet navy. And now I have job in sports club. I was boxer champion of Soviet navy, and now I be interested in more body building. I jocund and friendly boy, very loves beer and girls.

I decided write letter to you in order to say you American everybody good-

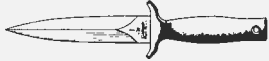


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- 440-A steel
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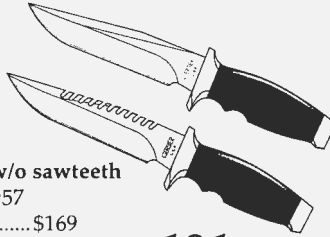
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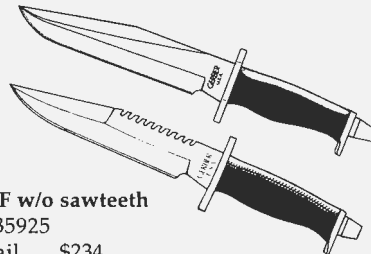
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people 3,000 miles away, in North America. I served as a member of the British security forces in Northern Ireland and lived there as a civilian before emigrating to Canada, so I feel more qualified than most to offer some opinions on what is going on there.

Many people in North America have romantic visions of the IRA sitting

around a peat fire singing rebel songs and plotting revenge against the Brits while cleaning their AKs. Nothing could be further from the truth. IRA terrorists are nothing but cold-blooded killers who are trying to bomb and shoot their way into power — backed, armed and trained by people from the PLO and Libya.

The people living in the six provinces of Ulster are predominantly Protestants who wish to stay with the rest of the British Isles. And it must be remembered that when Sinn Fein went to the people, it received 3% of the popular vote; the IRA still gets about 3% of the vote.

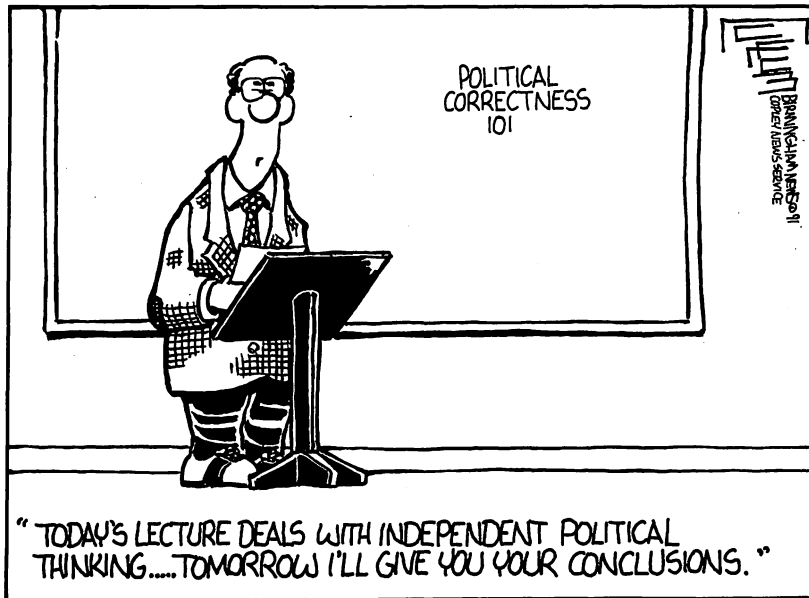
I am not a reporter or a politician — just a former soldier who has seen enough innocent people get their blood spilled in a country with some of the best and warmest people in the world.

R. Finner
Ontario, Canada

TRUE AND UNTRUE COLORS ...

I am an American citizen living and working abroad. I have always been very proud of being an American, and living abroad for so many years has not diminished this feeling, but enhanced it.

Our victory in the Persian Gulf War has invigorated our pride and courage. It has also, in most instances, helped us to distinguish between our real allies, and our false ones. A dormant anti-Americanism reveals itself when it comes to taking sides. I have personally found myself in many verbal skirmishes with many former friends who unveiled their true selves during the war.



"TODAY'S LECTURE DEALS WITH INDEPENDENT POLITICAL THINKING.....TOMORROW I'LL GIVE YOU YOUR CONCLUSIONS."

I hope the U.S. government does not forget who our real friends and foes are. I am aware of the complexities of international relations, but am sure we can find many ways to apply "punitive" measures against those who were friends only until the going got rough.

Michael A. Todisco
Luogosano, Italy

JERKS UNITE ...

Congratulations on the 16th anniversary of SOF Magazine! Yours is a very necessary publication, and we are fortunate to receive it here in Greece. Taking courage from the letter of Bill Hermann in your May '91 issue, I want to say that those who burn the flag of the United States do not harm the morale of the vast majority of Americans; burning the flag only gives courage to the enemies of the United States.

Here in Greece, for example, some communists burned the American flag in front of the American Embassy during the Persian Gulf War. There are not too many enemies of the United States in Greece, but it is one of the few places in the world where people gather to show the rest of the world what jerks they are.

P.S. During the war, I wanted to be in the U.S. Marines or U.S. Navy so I could have kicked some Iraqi butt. But since I wasn't, I wished the best of luck to those who did.

Fotis Kalathas
Saloniki, Greece

DODGE AND GAG ...

On the nightly news this evening, I saw the most nauseating thing I have

ever witnessed. Dan Quayle, our jerk of a vice president, placed a wreath at the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. During the Vietnam War, he dodged the draft by joining the National Guard. This man, just because he is vice president, has not earned the right for placing a wreath at that tomb. In my opinion, this episode is just another way of showing this draft-dodging

weenie down our throats.

Charles Young
Rome, Georgia

REAL DEAL ON STEEL ...

Having just read your article "Sharp Edge of Desert Storm" by Greg Walker, I wanted to let you know the "real deal" regarding knives in Desert Storm.

First, no knife was authorized by my division if it had a blade longer than 3 inches — folding or fixed. We were subject to a general court-martial if one was found on us. Needless to say, the troops and NCOs in my unit told our CO he could shove his stupid regulation on knives. We took what we needed!

I carried a Cold Steel SRK, which performed flawlessly; its fairly tough sheath, however, came apart after repeated exposure to wet weather. When it came time for heading home, we were told to get rid of our knives. Some guys tried to mail them home, others gave them to Bedouins. I buried mine deep in the Saudi sand — if I didn't get to have it, then no one would.

Once again, one of hundreds of insane Army regulations almost got in the way of a group of dedicated men trying to do their job. Keep up the good work, SOF. Death to tyrants!

Cpl. Christopher Patson
First Armored Division
Ansbach, Germany

Something on your mind? Write and tell us about it. We reserve the right to edit for content or brevity. Send letters to: FLAK, c/o SOF, PO Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306 ✕

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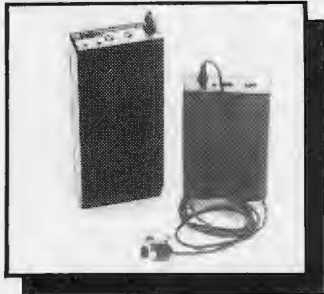
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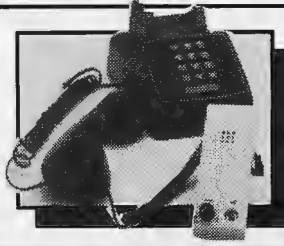
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Part 2 of the video examines the ins and outs of room bugs, including transmitters, wired microphones, laser listening devices, contact and parabolic mikes and body wires. See how these insidious bugs can be disguised as electrical outlets,

smoke detectors, pens, calculators and cigarettes.

The video concludes with a look at the best countermeasures against tapping and bugging, including a how to detect transmitters, sweeping and detection gear that works and tips on how to perform a physical search of a room.

Don't let others invade your business or personal life. Find out how to protect yourself today!

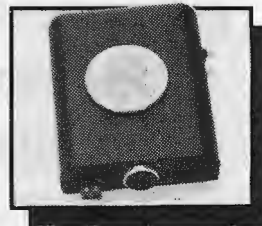
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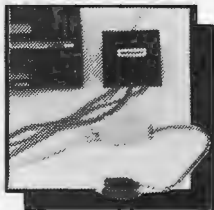
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BATTLE BLADES

by Greg Walker

Combat Switchblades

ON 12 August 1958, the U.S. Congress passed Public Law 85-623, which made the manufacture, distribution, and transportation of switchblade knives illegal.

Public Law 85-623 was a knee-jerk reaction on the part of Congress to deal with a non-existent problem. Like the ban on assault rifles, the hysteria over switchblade knives was more easily addressed by passing a restrictive law than by punishing those individuals who used them to commit crimes.

It was determined that switchblades were bad. The logic of the legislators was that if they were taken out of circulation, the bad people might also go away.

In fact, the spring-driven or gravity-induced blade is perhaps the safest knife the outdoorsman, police officer or soldier can carry. Indeed, many civilian law enforcement agencies are excluded from P.L. 85-623 when it comes to their officers toting switchblades.

The military's use of spring-driven knives includes utility blades as well as offensive/defensive designs. Camillus of New York manufactured an international orange-handled automatic possessing a spring-driven utility clip-point and a manual shroud cutter. Most of these ended up with the Air Force, although quite a few found their way into the hands of eager paratroopers.

With respect to *mano a mano*, or hand-to-hand (combat), the edged au-

tomatic continues to be employed in specific military units. These are limited runs of custom-designed automat-

classified out-of-country mission carried out by Marine Corps SpecOps personnel. The design has produced a civilian offspring, and is available primarily at gun and knife shows around the country.

What this means is that quality switchblade and gravity knives are taken seriously as operational hardware. We are not talking about the Mexican/Italian pattern made infamous by the classic film "West Side Story." Rather, the blades which invite consideration are state-of-the-art cutlery which offer clever opening sys-

tems and superb handling characteristics. Knives from this category are fairly expensive to obtain and require waiting periods of up to a year.

The advantages of a combat automatic are three-fold. The first has to do with single-hand opening, allowing the free hand to be otherwise engaged while the knife is coming into play. Secondly, knives from this category are, for the most part, light and compact. Lastly, automatics are fast when it comes to deployment under stress. This attribute translates into a potential life-saving performance, whether you are cutting through a jammed

safety belt on a downed chopper, or responding to a terrorist/criminal attack on a crowded city street.

Butch Vallotton is one of the premier makers of combat automatics in the custom knife industry. His designs include hidden opening buttons, multiple opening systems, and sure-safety




The Marine Corps ordered 32 "Black Knives" for an over-the-wire mission involving SpecOps personnel. The design has since become available to the civilian market.

ics, one of the most recent referred to as the "Black Knife" by those in the business. Designed by a Florida knife maker in 1989 at the behest of the Marine Corps, a shipment of 32 all-black automatics was sent to Norfolk, Virginia, for distribution. Sources reported the knives were issued on a

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mechanisms. Butch's knives are works of pure American craftsmanship, each requiring long hours of preparation before they are hand-fitted together and tested. Equally gifted are Vallotton's two sons, whose abilities and imagination have resulted in fixed blades as well as automatics of superior design.

My Vallotton evaluation knife was



Butch Vallotton's "Chute Knife" features an exceptionally strong spring, as well as a liner locking system. With a 5-inch blade, this is a serious auto-folder for military and law enforcement personnel.

provided by Harry Oliver (Dept. SOF, 224A Spring Meadow Dr., Holbrook, NY 11741), the exclusive distributor for many of Vallotton's unique designs. Centered on the multifunctional "chute blade" pattern, Butch selected ATS-34 as the steel for both the blade and the back/kick spring. This is a praiseworthy choice, as ATS-34 is an exceptional stain-resistant steel, highly durable and capable of holding a keen edge if sharpened correctly.

Liners and bolsters are fabricated from titanium, with handle scales formed from black linen Micarta. The resulting knife has the strength and durability of a bull rhino, which is what I want in a combat automatic.

Another knife maker who specializes in quality auto-folders is Ralph "Dewey" Harris (Dept. SOF, Box 597, Grovetown, GA 30813). Harris makes a lightweight knife using ATS-34 and black Micarta which weighs in at roughly 4 ounces.

Again, we see a removable spring as well as a nicely executed locking system. Harris offers a 4-inch utility blade as opposed to Vallotton's 5 inches of combat edge. Opening is a split-second procedure making the

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Ralph Harris specializes in low-profile auto-edges like the one pictured here. Wonderfully built yet beautifully simple in design, Harris' knives are preferred by those wanting a reliable "silent partner" close by.

knife handy while camping, fishing, hunting, or tooling around San Salvador on a Friday night in the *Zona Rosa*. Harris, like Valotton, excels in high-end automatics.

Both knives are capable of being fully disassembled, the Harris model

relying on four screws, the Valotton on 12. Several Allen wrenches are necessary in order to assemble and disassemble; Harris provides these for his knives.

Another combat automatic is made by Al Mar Knives. Based on AMK's successful SERE folder, Al Mar has collaborated with Butch and Shawn Valotton to produce a limited number of Auto-SEREs at \$550 per knife. I can say that they are works of pure genius.

Switchblades have come a long way since the early knives offered by such respectable firms as Boker, Camillus, Imperial and Schrade. Boasting intricate designs and quality materials, the custom knives discussed here are but three of the best available, all in use by law enforcement and military personnel. As responsive edged tools they are practical, safe, and nice to have in-hand when needed.

At the same time, it is important to remember that P.L. 85-623 is still very much in effect. Fines of up to \$2,000 per violation can be levied for possessing such a knife. Jail time is set at no more than five years per violation. Obviously it is in your best interests to be fully knowledgeable concerning the laws in your state when considering any auto knife purchase.

And, for those of us unable to afford such knives, there's always the late-night reruns of "West Side Story." ☒



Fluid in design and broad in mechanical considerations, the switchblade has evolved into an art form as well as a viable edged tool. Legal ownership and carry is regulated by Federal, state and local laws, with military and law enforcement agencies generally exempt due to their specialized equipment needs.



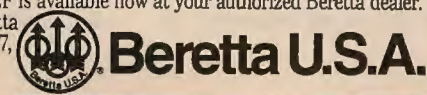
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Above — right side slide engraving.

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I WAS THERE

by Steve Kness

82nd Airborne Starts Rebellion

AS far as the rest of the world was concerned, the war with Iraq was over. Kuwait had been liberated, and the Iraqi Republican Guard was all but destroyed.

Our battalion, 3-505th of the 82nd Airborne Division, had been traveling across Iraq since the day before the ground war had started. Loaded on 5-ton trucks, our mission was to move north into Iraq, then east to cut off the supply lines for Iraqi units south of us, whether in Kuwait or southern Iraq.

Our convoy pulled onto a highway just north of Basra and headed north. The sides of the highway were littered with abandoned Iraqi equipment, destroyed vehicles and either hastily abandoned or completely destroyed fighting positions. Cluster bomb casings and fields of artillery-delivered land mines were everywhere.

The Iraqi civilians that we'd seen were warm and friendly, and greeted us with cheers and waves as the convoy roared by. Saddam Hussein enjoyed little popularity with these people.

Although our weapons were locked and loaded, the majority of them lay against the sides of the truck. Our antitank missiles were securely strapped down. Encountering the enemy was the last thing on anyone's mind.

As we moved north of Basra, the outskirts of a small town came into view — Sod Ash Shuyakh. Our mission, we had been told that morning, was to secure various road intersections in the town and to basically establish an American presence there.

We entered the town. The convoy halted momentarily to drop off a fireteam to secure an intersection. The fireteam fanned out, two men in the road to stop any vehicles that came by, and one on either side to cover them.

"Hey, check it out!"

Our truck's .50 caliber machine gunner laughed and pointed ahead of us. At a road intersection 200 meters away stood a giant billboard bearing Saddam Hussein's portrait.



Photo: Blythe Camenson

**We started a damned rebellion!
As soon as people heard that
Americans had arrived, these guys
started grabbing AKs and
attacking the government troops.**

We didn't even notice when the Iraqi vehicle rolled into view. It was moving toward the same intersection that we were, the one with the billboard watching over it. Several seconds later, someone spotted it.

"Enemy at 11 o'clock!"

As shouts filled the air, everyone jumped to their feet. The convoy jerked to a halt. As we all watched the Iraqi vehicle, the soldiers aboard it finally spotted us. Their eyes widened in surprise. Even from where we were, we could see the expressions of pure horror on the enemy soldiers' faces.

"Get the bastards!" someone cried.

With a resounding roar, our platoon vaulted out of the first two trucks and stormed across the fields toward the soldiers. All thoughts of formation and tactics were gone. It was nothing but an all-out charge, a bum-rush, a wild, thoughtless race to get the Iraqis before they got away. They took one look, dropped their weapons, and ran.

"Halt! Halt! Kiff! Kiff!" Our CO's shouts echoed across the field. He fired several shots into the air. As soon as they heard the firing, their hands flew up. We were taking fire from the woodline. Occasional puffs of dirt and water flew into the air as the rounds hit home.

We finally caught the soldiers about 100 meters from the building. Shouts rose into the air as we motioned for

them to lie face down on the ground. Within a matter of seconds, more than 20 Iraqi soldiers lay beside the road, their hands behind their heads.

Three of us approached a pair that lay near. While another man pulled security, we searched the two. The search was brief and thorough. Their boots were cut off and removed, their pockets torn open. Everything but their ID cards and money were thrown away. Within 10 minutes, the prisoners were bound and awaiting a truck that would take them to the nearest POW camp.

In the meantime, I had joined a hastily formed group that was headed for the building that the Iraqis had been

trying to reach. Too scattered to find our original squads, we just formed new ones and carried on.

The building's entrance was on the far side. We covered the windows and rooftop as we moved up to the buildings, then began skirting the walls. As soon as one of our guys moved around the corner on the far side of the vehicle, he froze. A Soviet-made armored recon vehicle sat in the building's courtyard, not 10 meters away.

He muttered a brief curse, then realized that if it had been occupied, we would've already been dead men. He turned around.

"We've got a BRDM up here. It's unoccupied."

We quickly moved forward while a team searched the vehicle. It was empty of people, but held several chemical suits, AK-47s, and ammunition for the vehicle's weapons.

We quickly realized that the building was the headquarters for the local detachment of government soldiers. As we searched, gunfire began to sound in the distance, first to the north, then the south, and finally it seemed to come from every direction. Off to the south, where the downtown area of the town lay, huge clouds of smoke began to rise into the air.

Back near the intersection with Hus-

Continued on page 88



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WORLD SITREP

4 ANGOLA

After last-minute fighting for position, MPLA and UNITA sign peace accord ... Portugal (colonial power), USSR (surrogate handler #1), U.S. (surrogate handler #2) to form joint political/military commission with MPLA and UNITA representatives to prepare elections and monitor formation of 40,000-man united military ... U.S., USSR, promise no more military aid.

2 ALBANIA

Among boats escaping to Italy was a *Huchan*-class, Chinese-built fast attack craft with crew of 11.

1 AFGHANISTAN

Regime air force Su-22 "Fitter" bombed village of Namadguti-poen, 150km inside USSR, killing four; Kabul says plane was on mission against mujahideen, blamed pilot error.

3 ALGERIA

Algerian army pursues crackdown on Moslem fundamentalists; arms caches uncovered, many arrests, many protests quashed.

5 ARGENTINA

Condor 2 ballistic missile program officially canceled in a "complete and irreversible decision."

6 BURMA

Took delivery of six Yugoslav Soko Super Galeb G-4 attack/trainers; Burmese pilots training at Yugoslav Air Force Academy; SLORC has option to buy a dozen more ... Competing for influence, India and China flooding SLORC with weapons to be used against ethnic groups fighting for liberty.

7 CAMBODIA

Jakarta peace talks awry; renewed fighting between Cambodian People's Armed Force and Khmer Rouge near Pailin, 40km from Thai border.

8 CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

Under pressure from France, current chief donor, government frees 12 held for assassination of presidential adviser Bernard Kowada.

9 CUBA

Double agent claims he infiltrated CIA, provided data on Radio Marti before it began transmitting in March 1990.

10 ETHIOPIA

Formal plan for interim government presented by provisional government ... Tentative agreement with Eritreans allowing their plebiscite for independence if they guarantee access to Red Sea.

11 GERMANY

United capital will be Berlin; move will probably take a decade or so ... Agreement with USSR to pay for 3,000 homes for returning Soviet troops hit snag — Sovs want to hire cheaper Finnish and Turkish contractors to do work ... *Der Spiegel* reports 139 violations by German companies selling arms to Iraq, some in 1991.

12 HUNGARY

Soviet army, after 47-year occupation, completely gone; locals celebrating.

13 INDIA

Some 162 Maoist rebels fighting for independence in Assam state surrender en masse, bringing 50 weapons and a "huge" quantity of ammo.

14 IRAQ

Saddam purges chief of staff and head of military intelligence in latest shakeup; still-current defense minister is Saddam's cousin and son-in-law, Gen. Hussein Kamel al-Majid.

15 JAPAN

Flotilla of Japanese minesweepers on duty in Gulf will stay even if U.S. launches surgical strikes on suspected nuclear facilities in Iraq.



29

USSR

Trying again to sell Yak-141 vertical/short take off and landing (V/STOL) fighters to India; Yak-141 is only supersonic V/STOL yet developed, but Sovs need capital to produce them ... Surprise offer to sell Israel SA-10 "Grumble" surface-to-air missile systems, which they claim are superior to U.S. Patriot, having ceiling of 25,000 meters, 90km range ... Fire at U.S. Embassy destroys intelligence-gathering equipment; Soviet firemen steal classified files from offices during fire.

28

TURKEY

Playing with late-model Soviet Mil MI-8T "Hip C" chopper that recently emigrated from USSR ... Buying 10 Patriot air-defense systems from Raytheon.

26

SYRIA

Buying \$2 billion in Soviet weapons from Moscow (300 T-72 and T-74 tanks, more than 50 MiG-29 fighters, plus early warning radars and SAM 11, 13, and 16 surface-to-air missiles); follow-on deal for SU-27 "Flanker" fighters; concurrent deals will get them up to 500 surplus T-72 tanks from Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia and Romania.

27

THAILAND

More than 100 druggies killed inside Burma by Thai choppers armed with rockets and machine guns; drug lord Khun Sa orders in 500 reinforcements.

25

SWITZERLAND

Resuming arms sales to Turkey; largest contract affected is \$160 million deal for 25mm Oerlikon cannons.

24

SOUTH KOREA

Current plans call for all 43,000 U.S. troops to be under Korean command by end of 1992; leader probably will be Gen. Kim Yin Young, now deputy to Gen. RisCassi.

23

SRI LANKA

Takes delivery of Chinese FT-5 jet trainers, waiting on F-7 interceptors; jets for counter guerrilla operations and to protect against Indian incursions; also getting 12 130mm Type 59-1 artillery pieces, three more fast attack craft, 21 Type 85 tracked IFVs from China ... Much activity in northern Jaffna by both Tamil Tigers and government forces.

22

SIERRA LEONE

Receiving "non-lethal" military aid in face of widening conflict with neighboring Liberia.

21

SENEGAL

15 separatist Casamance rebels killed during ambush of army patrol; 30 more wounded in botched attack near border with Guinea Bissau; border now sealed.

20

RWANDA

In peace talks between government, rebels have hammered out amnesty, terms for direct talks with government; neighboring countries agree to let refugees return home.

18

NORTHERN IRELAND

IRA forced char woman at Beleek police base to carry bomb in handbag to police station while they held her husband, neighbor and neighbor's young daughter hostage; cops spotted terrified woman, had her drop bomb, cleared the area; no injuries, minimal damage; IRA didn't make good on threat to kill hostages.

19

PHILIPPINES

USAF withdrawing most of troops — damage to Clark AFB from erupting Mt. Pinatubo makes squabble over terms of staying a moot point; civilian death toll more than 300 ... Chairman of Philippine senate defense committee states first four months of 1991 saw 171 NPA attacks; NPA won 17 of 30 major engagements with government forces, killing 563 government troops while losing 447 of its own.

16

LEBANON

19 killed, 58 wounded in fighting between PLO guerrillas and Lebanese troops as Syrian-backed government continues largest offensive in 16 years ... Israeli air force attacks three Palestinian militia bases in Lebanon in strongest air attacks since 1982 invasion.

17

MOZAMBIQUE

Thousands flee into South Africa to escape fighting between RENAMO and government troops.



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Combat Pistol Ammo Update

FULL AUTO

by Peter G. Kokalis

IF. Sometimes that can be a mighty big word. If Winchester had introduced its new .45 ACP 230-grain Jacketed Hollow Point (JHP) bullet two years ago it would have out-performed every other projectile entered in the FBI's highly publicized test and evaluation of handgun ammunition. The FBI would probably not have adopted a down-loaded 10mm Auto cartridge. Smith & Wesson and Olin/Winchester would then not have been motivated to develop the short-case .40 S&W cartridge. Handgun manufacturers would not have been able to design pistols in this caliber. The popular gun press would have had little to write about.

SOF recently evaluated the terminal effects of Winchester ammunition loaded with this new bullet. The velocity averaged about 835 fps from the 5-inch barrel of a Colt Government Model 1911A1. The 3.5-inch barrel of a Colt Officer's ACP Model generated 805 fps. The depth of penetration in soft tissue averaged about 15.5 inches with consistent, concentric expansion of the bullet to approximately .65 caliber at both velocities.

That's precisely the performance we want. Penetration is, without doubt, the most important single parameter in the wound ballistics of handgun ammunition. The bullet must penetrate deeply enough to crush, cut and break through the human body's vital structures and organs. Any handgun bullet not capable of penetrating at least 12 inches is not acceptable and the capacity to penetrate up to 20 inches of soft tissue is desirable. Once we've obtained the required penetration, the bullet that makes the biggest hole will do the most damage.

Necessary or not, the .40 S&W cartridge and a glut of pistols chambered for it have arrived and will be



SOF tested the wound ballistics potential of several new loads in the most popular combat handgun calibers: .45 ACP, 9mm Parabellum, .40 S&W and 10mm Auto. To no one's surprise, Winchester's new 230-grain JHP .45 ACP load out-performed all others, followed by Hornady's 180-grain JHP .40 S&W ammunition.

with us for some time into the foreseeable future. It is superior to the 9mm Parabellum. Most of the .40 S&W ammunition we tested was effective and it appears that the ammunition manufacturers are starting to produce handgun bullets of the proper design.

Our tests in this caliber were conducted with a Smith & Wesson Model 4006 with a 4-inch barrel. Federal's 180-grain JHP without a post averaged 944 fps, expanded to .65 caliber and penetrated, without fragmentation, from 12.3 to 12.5 inches of soft tissue. This is acceptable performance. Their 180-grain JHP Hydra-Shok bullet with its goofy post is loaded into an impressive nicklel-cased. Its performance is less than impressive. Expanding to .68 caliber, it penetrates only 11.7 to 11.9 inches of soft tissue while traveling at 945 fps. That's marginal and we surely don't need to pay more for less.

Winchester's 180-grain in this caliber also travels downrange at about 940 fps, expands to .65 caliber with only minor fragmentation and penetrated about 12.5 inches of soft tissue.

Hornady's .40 S&W ammunition, when loaded with their 180-grain JHP XTP bullet, turned in the best performance. Velocity ranged from 948 to 972 fps. Expansion was stellate-shaped, with the points averaging .68 caliber and the flats at about .64 caliber. There was no fragmentation and this bullet will penetrate about 14.2 inches of soft tissue. Black Hills Ammunition also uses the Hornady 180-grain JHP XTP bullet at a velocity that varies from 855 to 890 fps. However, penetration, while an excellent 17 to 18.7 inches, is provided at the expense of expansion, which drops to approximately .54 caliber as only the jacket peels back.

Two 155-grain JHP .40 S&W bullets were tested. Winchester's Silvertip travels at about 930 fps and expands to about .62 caliber and penetrates 12.4 to 13 inches with no fragmentations. Hornady's bullet in this weight performs more erratically. Velocity varies by more than 100 fps (1,044 to 1,146 fps). Expansion is consistent at .62 caliber, but there is noticeable fragmentation of the lead alloy core all

along the wound track and penetration varies from 10.3 to 13.4 inches. I believe we would be better served if a 200-grain JHP bullet was developed for the .40 S&W. Until that occurs, 180-grain JHP bullets should be selected and, at present Hornady ammunition provides the best performance in this weight.

We also tested a 170-grain lead alloy, truncated cone bullet loaded by Accurate Ammunition. The velocity is about 970 fps. Bullets of this configuration are commonly shoulder stabilized and will not yaw in the target, nor do they deform. As a consequence, they will invariably over-penetrate. This one traveled 39 inches before it exited the tissue simulant. Save bullets of this type for punching paper.

Black Hills 10mm Auto ammunition with both Winchester and Hornady 180-grain JHP bullets was fired through a Glock Model 20 with a 4.6-inch barrel. Stepping out at about 1,000 fps the Winchester bullet performed in an erratic manner. When it expanded to .70 caliber with minimal fragmentation, it penetrated to a depth of more than 13 inches. However, sometimes this bullet will lose almost 30% of its original weight to small fragments all along the wound track.

When this happens, the remaining diameter is no greater than about .50 caliber and penetration increases to

almost 16 inches. Unless fragments move significantly away from the permanent wound cavity (as they do in the case of M193/M855 5.56x45mm NATO ball ammunition), they have little effect and do not increase the bullet's performance. The Hornady bullet, at approximately the same velocity, penetrated more than 20 inches of soft tissue because only the jacket peeled back and the expanded diameter was no greater than .53 caliber.

In my opinion, the 10mm Auto cartridge exists without a clearly defined mission. When loaded to case capacity, perceived recoil is severe, muzzle climb is acute, muzzle flash is objectionable, the endurance life of most pistols chambered for it is seriously compromised and most hollow-point bullets will either over-expand and thus under-penetrate or turn into frangible missiles and break apart. It deserves a quiet burial and no more than a footnote in the history of handguns.

There are still a bunch of 9mm Parabellum pistols out there and, as it falls well behind the .45 ACP and .40 S&W in wound ballistics potential, we need to maximize this cartridge's performance to the fullest extent possible. Subsonic 147-grain JHP bullets provide the best performance to date in this caliber. We tested three different loads of this type.

Winchester's subsonic 147-grain

JHP bullet has a velocity of about 1,020 fps when fired through the 4 5/8-inch barrel of a Browning High Power, consistently expands to a concentric .58 caliber and penetrates more than 13.5 inches of soft tissue. Black Hills uses the Hornady 147-grain XTP bullet driven at about 1,025 fps. Expansion is to a disappointing .47 caliber with some fragmentation. This bullet will penetrate up to 18.5 inches.

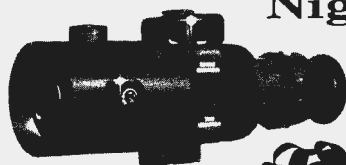
Fiocchi's 147-grain JHP expands up to .60 caliber with no fragmentation and penetration up to 14 inches with an average velocity of approximately 980 fps. An interesting feature of the Fiocchi load is its overall loaded length, which is only 1.1 inches — significantly shorter than most 9mm military ball. As a result, it will feed reliably in sub-machine guns, such as the UZI, which will usually not accept ammunition with hollow-point bullets.

Three other .45 ACP loads were tested in comparison with the Winchester 230-grain JHP. Most unusual in appearance was the Devel bullet developed by Charles Kelsey. This pointed projectile has been swage-formed with six concentric fins that radiate downward and away from the bullet's nose. They are supposed to cut and slice through tissue during their travel through the body. In fact they do

Continued on page 92

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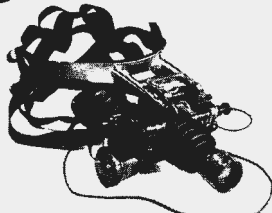
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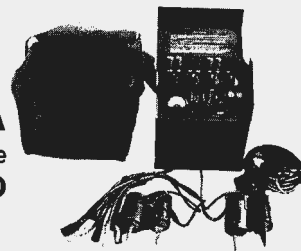
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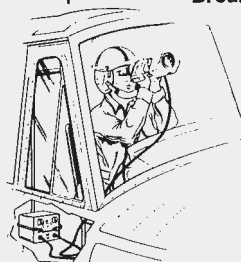
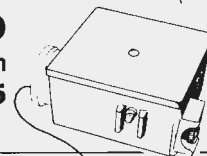


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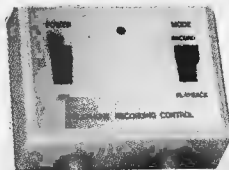
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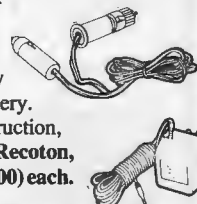
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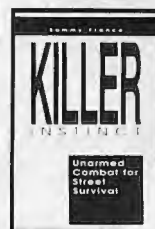
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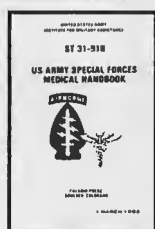
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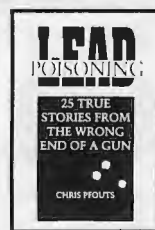
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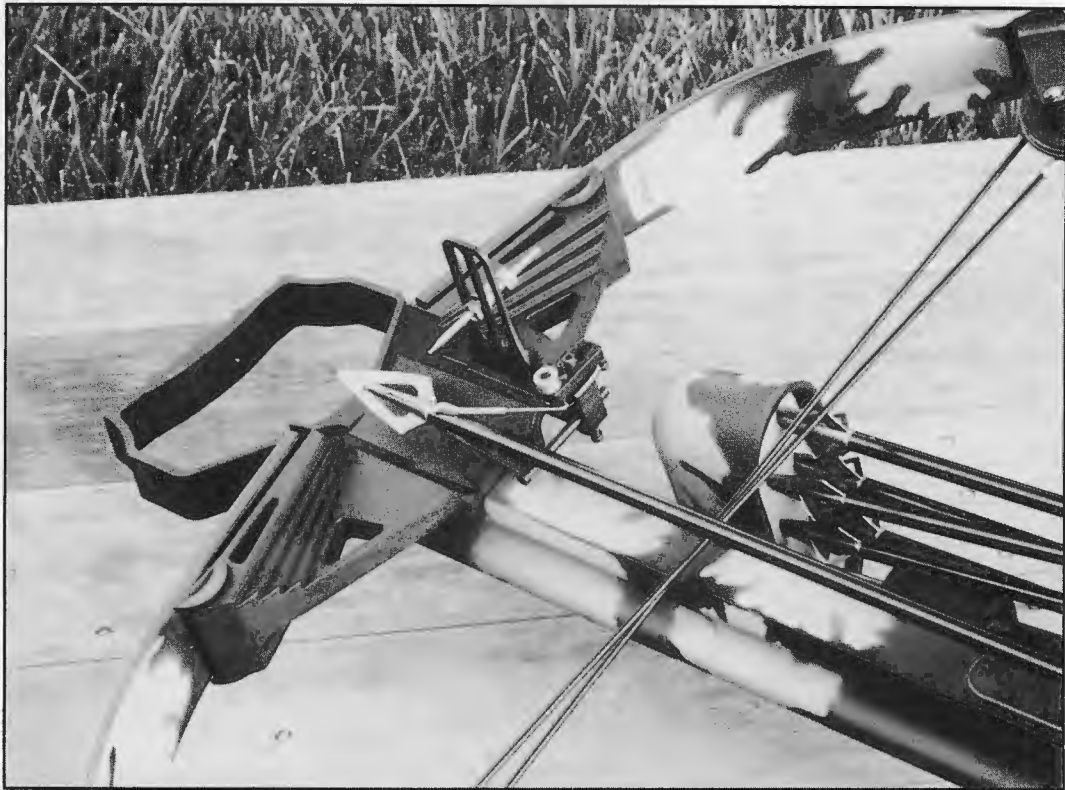
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Text & Photo by Chuck Fremont



SILENT or suppressed weapons are generally regarded as special operations hardware — exotic materiel for clandestine missions.

That's unfortunate since many combat situations call for quiet weapons. Even a mechanized infantry unit will employ light infantry in reconnaissance roles, and such lightly armed patrols have a legitimate need for "low noise signature" weapons. Yet few unit armories contain suppressed weapons, and the only silent weapons most soldiers will ever carry are their fighting knives, bayonets, or their hands.

But a knife doesn't reach very far. An arrow, accurately launched by a skilled Bowman, has a bit more range. During World War II, the 10th Mountain Division employed archers for sentry removal and other missions requiring quiet kills, and modern crossbow designs were investigated by the U.S. Office of Strategic Services (OSS) under the code name "William Tell." Since World War II, archery equipment has undergone considerable refinement. The most advanced example of this is the modern compound crossbow. These weapons are worth consideration as quiet, flashless weapons.

Modern hunting crossbows, with 150-pound draw weights and arrow speeds roughly half again as quick as

Precision Shooting Equipment's Crossfire is a top-quality hunting crossbow capable of silently shooting a broadhead-tipped aluminum arrow at 266 fps. Such a weapon has obvious applications to military situations such as sentry removal.

standard compound hunting bows, are formidable weapons. The relatively flat trajectory and more natural pointing characteristics of the crossbow compared to a traditional hunting bow make it easier to shoot accurately. Low-power telescopic sights and even red-dot and laser optical sights can be used on modern crossbows. Night vision sights can also be mounted. But these are short range weapons, so such exotic aiming devices are of questionable need.

Another advantage of the crossbow is its ability to hold the bowstring — or "cable," as it is known on modern crossbows — in a full-draw position almost indefinitely. Though powerful crossbows require strength to draw, a sustained hold is no problem. This is an obvious advantage in a military situation, since the crossbowman needn't risk alerting a sentry or enemy point man with the movement of the draw. The crossbow can also be fired from a prone position or from a confined space such as a "spider hole" — something you can't do with a standard bow.

I recently purchased a state-of-the-art modern crossbow to see just what it

Continued on page 29

PSE CROSSFIRE SPECIFICATIONS

Weapon type: Compound crossbow
Draw weight: 150 pounds
Arrow velocity (manufacturer's specification): 266 feet per second
Approximate kinetic energy: 78 foot pounds
Overall length (front of stirrup to end of stock): 35 inches
Overall width (across bow, limbs relaxed): 29 inches
Overall weight (with bow quiver): 9 pounds 1 ounce
Bow quiver capacity: 8 arrows
Arrow weight: 495 grains (1.1 ounces)
Arrow length: 19 3/8 inches
Finish: Gray on black leaf pattern
Approximate retail cost (including quiver and 8 arrows): \$450

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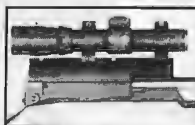
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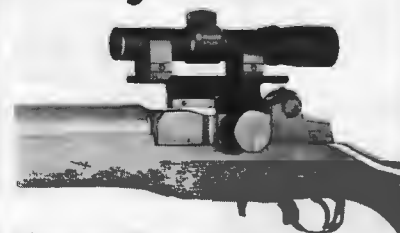
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could do. This weapon, a Crossfire manufactured by Precision Shooting Equipment (PSE) of Tucson, Arizona, mounts a compound bow to an aluminum alloy stock. The trigger is forward of the nock (anchor) point in a configuration similar to a "bullpup" rifle, though the safety is located at the nock point. This makes for a compact, well-balanced weapon.

An eight-arrow quiver mounts to either side of the Crossfire's stock — to suit right- or left-handed shooters — and hunting broadheads are shielded inside a molded hood. PSE's gray-black leaf pattern camouflage is suitable for multiple environments. The Crossfire's limbs are made of a fiberglass-graphite fiber laminate of great strength, and the draw weight is roughly twice that of a typical modern

MAJOR CROSSBOW MANUFACTURERS

Barnett International Inc., Dept. SOF PO Box 934, Odessa, FL 33556; 813-920-2241

Bear Archery Inc., Dept. SOF, 4600 SW 41st Blvd., Gainesville, FL 32601
Horton Crossbow Mfg. Inc., Dept. SOF, 1325 Waterloo Rd., Suffield, OH 44260; 216-628-9218


Precision Shooting Equipment Inc., Dept. SOF, PO Box 5487, Tucson, AZ; 602-884-9065

compound hunting bow.

It isn't an absolutely silent weapon. Immediately after release, you will hear the distinctive sound of the cable and arrow whipping forward, and there is a loud "thunk" as the arrow strikes the target. But no recoil or other shock is transferred to the shooter.

Shooting from a stable sitting position at 40 meters, it took six shots to adjust the sight pin to bring the arrows onto the center of the target. I was soon hitting in a 10-inch pattern around the bull's-eye. Shooting prone — remember, this is one of the big advantages crossbows have over even short-limbed hunting bows — resulted in bull's-eye hits at 80 meters. A bipod would probably extend useful range beyond 100 meters.

As with any compound bow, maximum draw weight occurs at about the halfway point in the draw, and only about half of the draw weight is exerted by the cable at full draw.

Sentry removal is probably the most likely mission for a crossbow. This means a first-shot kill, preferably through a central nervous system hit. A trained crossbowman shooting this weapon from a prone-supported position should get a certain kill at 40 meters. Getting within 40 meters of a sentry may be tough, but it's a lot easier than getting to knife range. 

Glass carving is a dying art, and I am one of the few master glass etchers who carry on the trade. If this sounds like I'm proud of my work I am! I'm also proud of being a dog handler in Vietnam, where because of SCOUT (my friend and my dog) no patrol we led was ever bushwacked. So much for my background. What I'm offering, is ... a first class carving of your service logo, patch or map of where you served, on glass. Please don't go by the picture you see here, as the true glass carving does not show up well in a photograph.

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BUNGEE FEVER

SOF Staff 16th Anniversary Jump

by John Coleman



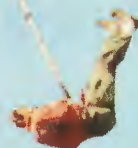
Managing Editor John Coleman: Finally heard one "There I was, this ain't no shit" story too many. Photo: Erik Hyypla



Editor Tom Slizewski: "A ralse! After six years in this place, a ralse!" Photo: Erik Hyypla



Robert K. Brown's answer to recalcitrant staffers: "With or without the cord, son. Your choice." Photo: David Light



BUNGEE INFO ...

Bungee jumping, if done under the watchful eye of a professional crew, is great sport and a (relatively) safe endeavor. We were lucky to hook up with Adrenalin Adventures here in Boulder, who got us up and down in one piece.

I may not know much about the arts and practices of bungee'ing, but I can spot professional competence, and these folks have it. Adrenalin Adventures' staff ran a well-rehearsed and safety-conscious operation, and it's a pleasure to recommend their service.

Since you're all not going to trek here to Boulder to bungee, you will be pleased to know that Adrenalin Adventures offers international franchising. For more information, you can contact them at: Adrenalin Adventures, Dept. SOF, 831 1/2 19th St., Boulder, CO 80302; phone: (303) 440-6292.

Photos by Erik Hyypia, Adventure Photography, 2264-C Spruce St., Boulder, CO 80302.



Executive Editor John Krelger: In his own inimitable style, decides to jump from the ground up to the balloon.

Photo: Erik Hyypia

It was a tough call: Should the SOF staff motorcycle from Casablanca to Cape Town to celebrate our 16th Anniversary, or should we drive 15 miles outside Boulder and bungee jump?

Well ... all factors being equal (kind of), the deciding vote was cast by our business office — "Africa?" "Motorcycles?" "You gotta be kiddin'!" — and bungee jump it was.

At veeery-early-in-the-morning o'clock one fine June day, 13 intrepid SOF staffers threw caution and their bodies to the wind — and it was not a pretty sight. Subdued and pale, queasy rictus grins aplenty, staff went up in the balloon and came back down — arms flailing and legs whiplashing — at the end of a bungee cord.

You don't remember much about the jump except for the moment when mottled brown/green-hued earth rushes toward your face at an extremely high rate of knots (a real attention-getter), and you realize that all that stands between you and that earth is air and a big rubber band.

Well, we're now forming a politically correct, environmentally friendly, New Age Sensitive Group called "Friends of the Rubber Band" because — gosh darn it — it really works. (Too well sometimes: Our newest editor, Bob Glass, now has the name "Bungee Bob" because he let the cord get between his legs and when it snapped taut ... SPLANG! ... You can imagine the rest.)

One question that's popped up around this little adventure is why would a bunch of apparently normal people (us) get up at four in the morning, jump out of a hot air balloon and then bounce around beneath it like Tom Smothers' yo-yo? Well, it makes a better anniversary issue staff photo for one, but mainly, it was simply something exciting we hadn't done before.

That's what *Soldier of Fortune* Magazine and its readers — you — are all about. For 16 years we've "gone and done" — gone to places most people haven't heard of, and done things most people wouldn't dream of. And, as these photos show, we're still at it.

Crazy? A bit, but then that's an asset around this place. ✂



Circulation Director Lefty Wilson: "When sales jump, so do I." Photo: Erik Hyypia



"Yeah, it does kinda look like a cheap coffin, doesn't it?" Photo: David Light



SOF's "Bungee Bunch" 16th Anniversary Jump crowd: (top row, left to right) Dianne "you can't make me do it!" McLeod, Tom "Ninja Road Warrior" Slizewski, Jeff "too bad nobody broke nothin'" Bergeon, Adam "I be bad" Bressemer, John "what camera?" Coleman, Lefty "de plane, boss" Wilson, John "I'd rather be in Kawthoolei" Krelger, Earl "I don't know these guys" Homer; (bottom row, left to right) Krissie "Evil Dead" Anderson, Sue "I can't believe I really did that!" Max, Bungee Bob "OUCH" Glass, Deborah "that was neat, now what?" Homer, and Debbie "I'll just shoot the video, OK?" Goforth, who infiltrated from our distributor, Kable News. Photo: Sharon "If I take this photo I don't have to jump, do I?" Windsor

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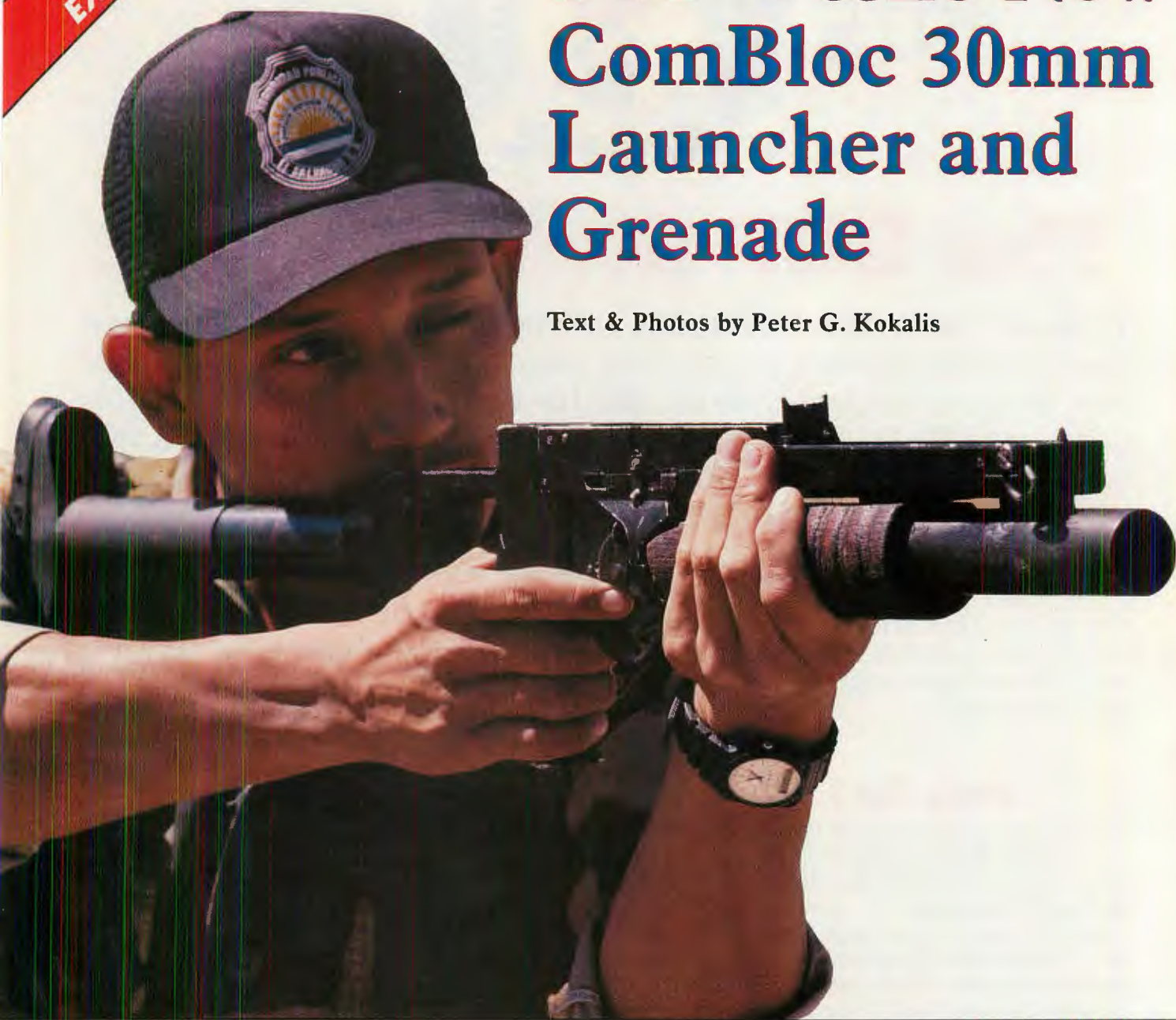
(SEE ATTACHED SWEEPSTAKES RULES)

BNS91

SALVADOR
EXCLUSIVE

SOF T&Es New ComBloc 30mm Launcher and Grenade

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis



My first exposure to the M26A2 30mm grenade launcher came in January 1990 when I examined a small handbook published by the Far-bundo Marti Liberation Front (FMLN), titled *Manuel de Instruccion para Commandos Urbanos 2* with the subtitle *Aprendamos a combatir — Aprendamos el uso de las armas* (Let's learn to fight — Let's learn the use of weapons).

This booklet covers the specifications, employment and disassembly of the RPK squad automatic weapon, PKM general purpose machine gun (GPMG), RPG-7

and RPG-18 rocket launchers and AKM rifle. It also has a seven-page section on the M26A2 with line drawings of the weapon both assembled and disassembled. At that time nothing else was known about this weapon.

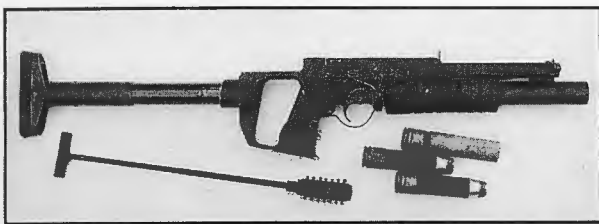
While prowling around the *almacen* (supply room) of the ERE (*Equipo de Reaccion Especial*) during SOF's most recent excursion to El Salvador, I discovered an M26A2 and a crate of ammunition. This permitted SOF's exclusive test and evaluation of what proved to be an interesting concept whose execution was badly flawed.

In outward appearance, the M26A2

ERE member prepares to fire captured M26A2 30mm grenade launcher.

looks something like an M203 40mm grenade launcher to which has been added the buttstock of the CIS-40GL 40mm grenade launcher (manufactured by Chartered Firearms Industries, Ltd. of Singapore). The overall length is approximately 31 1/8 inches. The weight, empty, is about 6.6 lbs.

The two-piece receiver is made of black-anodized, mill-finished aluminum alloy castings and the two components have been mated together with two steel pins. A steel breech face, through which a



Right side view of M26A2 30mm grenade launcher with VOG-26 30x28mm high-low propulsion HE grenade developed for this shoulder-fired weapon.

hole has been drilled to permit forward passage of the firing pin, has been press-fit into the receiver body. The trigger guard was fabricated from a steel sheet-metal pressing. All the trigger components were made of steel. There is a safety lever on the right side of the receiver above the trigger. Rotate it down and rearward to expose a red dot and to fire the launcher.

Both sights are frame-mounted and quite crude. The front sight consists of an unprotected, non-adjustable, tapered, round post. The folding, non-adjustable rear sight has an open U-notch marked "150" (meters).

How To Fire

The two-piece, tubular steel buttock can be removed by depressing a crudely checkered, spring-loaded catch/release. A roughly finished buttplate has been welded to the end of the stock tube. A substantial black rubber recoil pad with five compression holes was attached to the buttplate by two machine screws turned into threaded bushings in the pad. A "D" ring for the rear end of a carry sling was attached to the top recoil-pad screw. Another "D" ring in a swivel stud was mounted to the front of the receiver body on the right side.

Barrel length is about 11 3/8 inches. The bore of this steel barrel has 16 grooves with a right-hand twist of undetermined rate and in this regard it appears identical



Background: VOG-26 30x28mm grenade — note copper driving band near base of grenade body and blue color code on fuze tip which distinguishes this grenade from VOG-17. Foreground: left to right — fired case with high-pressure chamber removed, unfired case with high-pressure chamber and brass propellant cup.

to that of the Soviet AGS-17 30mm automatic grenade launcher. A grooved, tubular-shaped, wooden forearm was attached to the barrel with glue and

separated from the barrel after the first four rounds were fired. Two bent flat springs attached to the rear end of the forearm engage the grenade case's extractor grooves to hold it in place until the barrel assembly is locked into battery.

The M26A2's barrel slides forward for loading the 30mm high explosive (HE) grenade. Place the weapon on safe. Rotate the barrel locking lever (which also serves to cock the trigger mechanism) on the left side of the receiver past its rear spring-loaded stop button a full 180 degrees to the fixed front stop pin. The locking lever is attached to a round steel pin with a single flat surface. When the lever is rotated forward, the pin's flat surface faces down and the pin becomes disengaged from a half-circle notch on the barrel's locking lug. This frees the barrel and forearm assembly so they can be moved forward enough to insert a round into the chamber — somewhat in the manner of the M203. Push a round in the chamber until the bent clips on the forearm snap into the case's extractor groove.

Slide the barrel rearward until the base of the case contacts the breech face. Rotate the locking lever back 180 degrees and below its stop button. Rotate the safety until the red dot is exposed. Place the buttstock firmly into your shoulder. Align the sights. Pull the trigger. Be prepared for some fairly serious recoil — close to that of a 10 gauge Magnum shotgun shell.

After firing, rotate the locking lever 180 degrees forward once again. Slide the barrel assembly forward until the receiver mounted, spring-loaded extractor engages the case's extractor groove. Continue sliding the barrel assembly forward until the empty case is completely withdrawn from the chamber and falls to the ground.

Two Rounds To Breakdown

After we fired two rounds at the San Marcos police range, the barrel assembly would no longer move rearward enough, after a new

round was chambered, to engage the locking lever pin within the recess on the barrel's locking lug. Upon inspection, I observed that a steel sleeve in the chamber

had backed out about 1mm. Subsequently, after each shot was fired I had to beat this sleeve back into the chamber with a brass hammer in order to lock the launcher into battery. Since the barrel is made of steel, this is obviously not a pressure sleeve. Why is it there?

It has been stated that the M26A2 was designed to fire the same 30x28mm VOG-17 automatic high explosive fragmentation grenade as the Soviet AGS-17 automatic grenade launcher. This is, of course, preposterous as this high-pressure round, which travels downrange about 600 fps, would cause serious recoil damage to the operator if fired from a shoulder-held weapon.

As reported here for the first time, the designers of the VOG-26 grenade have cleverly altered the VOG-17 envelope and turned this high-pressure round into a high-low propulsion system similar in principle to the 40mm round used in the U.S. M79/M203 series of shoulder-fired



Left side view of field stripped M26A2 grenade launcher. Barrel stop must be removed to separate barrel assembly from receiver group. Note obliterated identification marks on receiver above trigger to disguise origin, which is most likely Cuba.

grenade launchers.

Using the 30x28mm belted, brass-washed, steel case (which is actually 28.2mm in length), they have removed enough of the interior at the base to accommodate a threaded, brass-washed, steel, high-pressure chamber about 20mm in exterior diameter. The top of this high-pressure chamber is slotted, presumably to accept a screwdriver for installation. There are 12 small port holes (2mm in diameter) around the circumference of the chamber on the side. A brass cup (about 0.3mm thick) fits into the chamber and contains the propellant charge (of unknown type and weight at this time). A large Boxer primer, approximately the size of a 12 gauge shotshell primer, protrudes about 5mm into the powder charge (almost into the center of the charge).

MOA

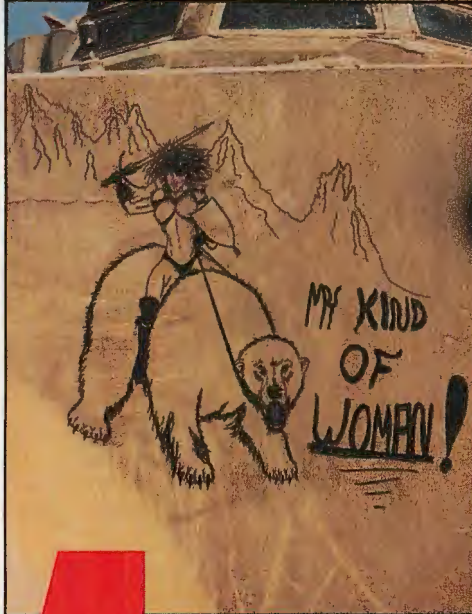
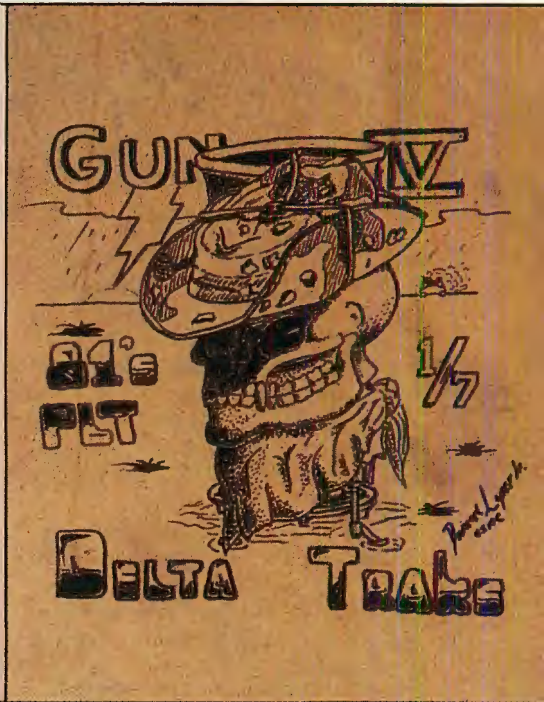
Method of operation is as follows: When the M26A2 firing pin strikes the primer, the resulting primer flash ignites the powder within the brass cup inside the

Continued on page 93

ARMOR ART

Text & Photos by J.J. Anderson

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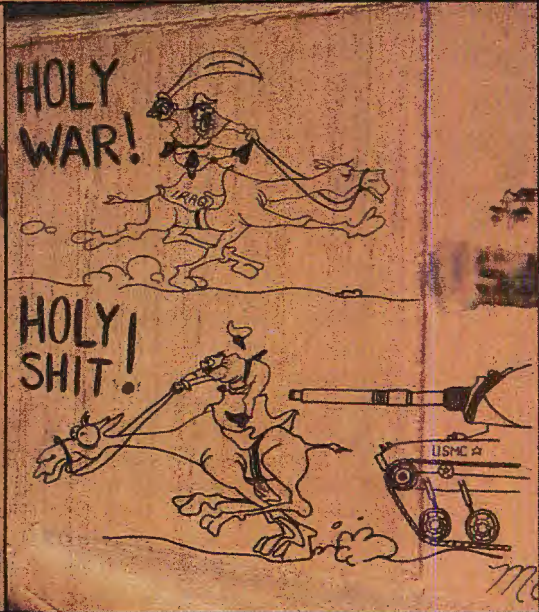
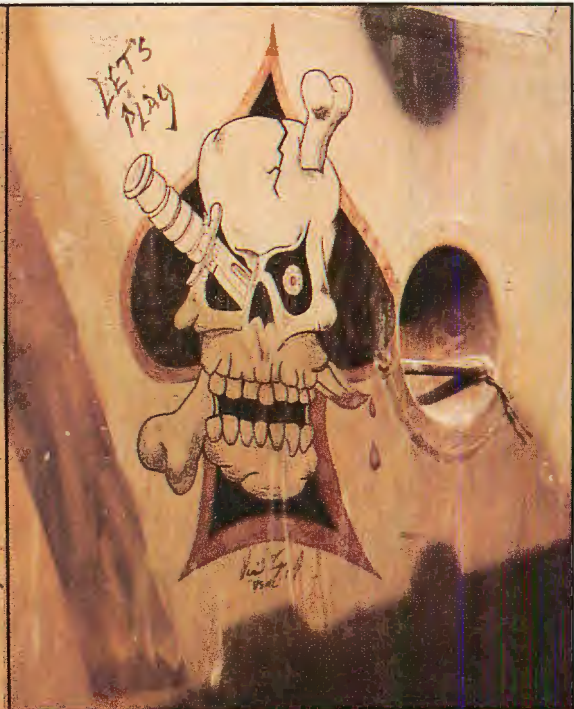
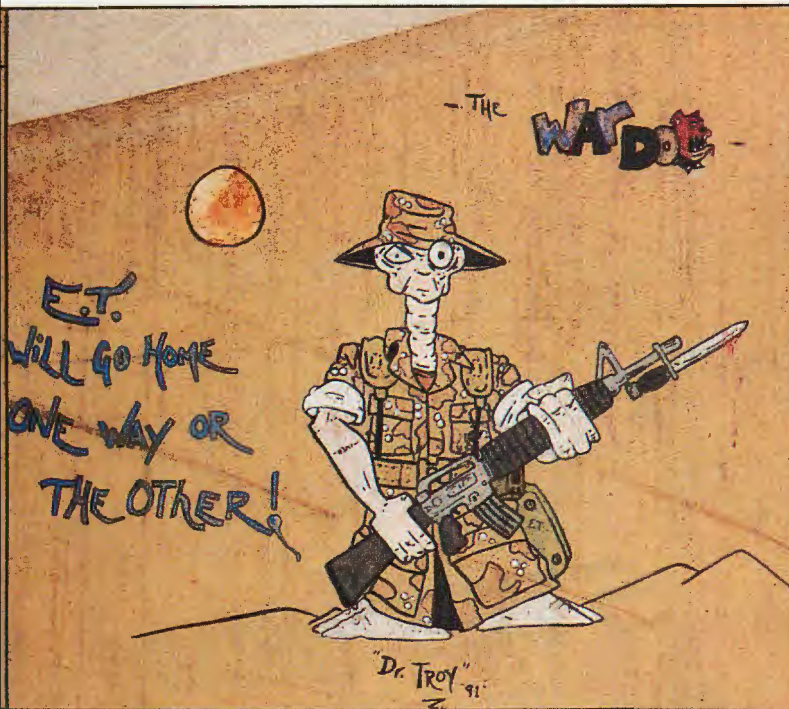


MILITARY people, perhaps more than any other professional group, have a tendency to deface their equipment. It is something definite, an unwritten yet universal rule, that in all likelihood has deep connections with the other great unspoken law of military life — the one about trying to get away with as much as possible before someone notices what you're up to.

It may be because we military types are not allowed much leeway regarding which tie to wear to work. It might have something to do with not being able to get an M1A1 Abrams tank in candy apple red, or have a spoiler added to the Humvee.

For the very sensible reason of increasing survivability, and therefore longevity, a great many of our service men and women have just spent the last year being intensely beige and brown — two truly boring colors that absolutely dominated everything and everyone around them. So rebellion comes as second nature, a logical reaction allowed by the system to some degree, and begins fairly close to the bone.

At the innermost level there exist tattoos, indelible ink hashmarks that chronicle time



largely spent at love or war. Next for the individual comes helmet and flak jacket doodling — names, calendars and clever sayings compete for space on these items.

But it is when we reach the crew-served weapons, the tanks, armored personnel carriers and artillery pieces, that the group mindset begins to appear. With these, there are also bigger spaces to draw on.

Standard marking for identification of larger weapons of war is a tactical requirement and all countries do it. For example, the arrowheads that appear in several of these photographs are part of a system used to mark what company a vehicle belongs to. It's an Israeli idea we borrowed a few years ago. Americans, however, have taken unofficial artwork to new heights. And probably in a few new directions. Maybe it's just because curb feelers and fuzzy dice aren't always right for certain situations.

In the Middle East, I had an opportunity to look at a good deal of equipment that we captured from the Iraqis. Aside from being second rate, I noticed a marked lack of personalization about their vehicles. Occasionally, there would be a photo of Saddam Hussein taped on something, but that was about it. Graffiti of any sort seemed to be nonexistent — just unit insignia, numbers and, in a few cases, instructions. Personally, I felt having to print instructions for use on things like artillery pieces was something one shouldn't have to do in the first place. Also, a lot of Iraqi equipment carried shipping labels.

Even the commercial hauling vehicles the Marines leased from local companies had a modicum of pizzazz to them. Covered with brightly colored geometric patterns, you tended to especially notice them when they were driven by a corporal named Denise or

ARMOR ART



Jennifer. Larger vehicles in Saudi became quite fancied up, from verses of the Koran on the tailboard to frilly cloth drapes in the cab the driver brought with him from Manila.

Some of the stenciled instructions I found in buses gave pause for thought (although no one obeys written instructions in the Magic Kingdom, anyway). But at least they got points for imagination. I found the captured Iraqi vehicles fairly dull. Americans, however, even managed to plaster their personalities on rented buses.

Bumper stickers from favorite radio stations appeared in quite a wide variety, also showing up on the odd tank, truck and armored car, along with some other strange signs. Unit insignia (most of it unofficial) quickly appeared. One popular theme was the Afrika Korps palm tree with the swastika replaced by the Marine eagle, globe and anchor.

I came across a Marine unit of amphibious tractors, LVTP-7s, or "tracks" as most people there called them. Walking among these 40-odd, 17-ton lightly armored troop carriers, I had to stop and wonder at the drawings painted on the sides of some of them. I hadn't quite known what to expect when they first started turning up. In some ways it was surprising.

Previous conflicts the U.S. has participated in showed a tendency on the part of the man in the arena to want to give identity to the equipment he worked with. An aircraft was given a name, sometimes that of a loved one, and became, possibly, a talisman of sorts, a good luck charm. Ask George Bush about this one — he had three airplanes, all of which had "Barbara" written on them. And look where he is now; there must be some magic to it, as the planes he flew were considered easy meat for Japanese Zeros.

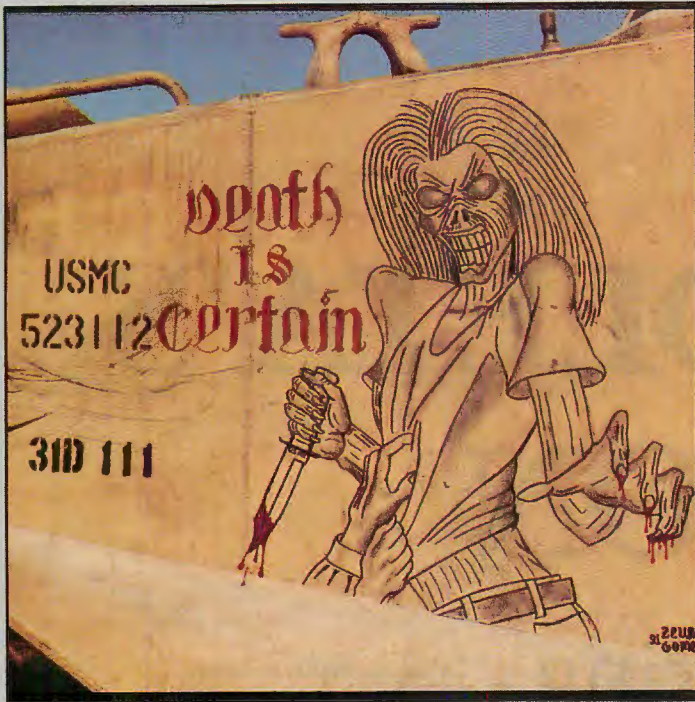
I've included a photograph of a drawing on one truck with a woman's name on it — it's the one with the female riding on what looks like a large rat or wild pig on a missile. Readers can make of it what they will.

As lucky charms go, though, characters from television and comics were the personae in vogue. Calvin of Calvin and Hobbes was featured several times, as was Bart Simpson. (Calvin seemed to be only slightly more popular.) Spaceman Spiff edged out advice about not having a cow by a narrow margin. I was surprised to see E.T. and his ominous message show up on one truck.

Women (as may be expected) were also a recurrent theme to be found on the sides of vehicles. While there seems to be a change in the sleepwear preferences, the curves are essentially the same as many a grandfather had painted on the nose of his B-17. The Vargas girl seems to have had an attack of metallica, but is basically unchanged.

Skulls, a traditionally crowd pleasing totem with some of the military minded, were also found in abundance. Camels in Saudi are the desert equivalent to possums in North Carolina, and parts of them lined the highways everywhere in the Kingdom. Their skulls, and those of goats, often turned up tied to the bumpers of trucks and on the glacis plates of tanks. I can't fault the Marines here, really — camels do indeed have strange looking brain cases.

The hand-drawn representatives, however, were always human, and a good deal of the time part of an altogether peculiar picture. I once worked in a bookstore close by the gates of Camp Lejeune. We couldn't keep enough copies of the Satanic Bible in stock, and this memory gave me the odd twinge while looking at some of the artwork I found. Mind you, Dungeons and Dragons also sold extremely well.



The thing to keep in mind though, is that the young men who ride in these armored buses are two generations removed from the men who flew over Europe and the Pacific. The Marines also ride, not fly, and are expected to fight in an environment radically different from the that of the airmen. Common sense tells the grunt that when the shooting starts, you are always safest in a well-dug hole in the ground. This is especially true in the desert, where tracks and tanks can, and were, seen and destroyed at ranges of more than a mile.

So these drawings reflect not just the fantasies and longings of young men new to war, but a bit of their fear as well. It's a simple thing to take comfort in a bold and terrible painted image you're familiar with. So classify the more bizarre sketches as war paint, just camouflage of the fact that like everyone else over there, they were a little concerned at one time or another about what the future had in store for them.

J.J. Anderson has spent time in the Rhodesian and South African security forces, as well as the U.S. Marines. He was called to active duty with the latter while working in Saudi Arabia as a civilian.

VIOLETA'S VISION

ON 25 February 1990, Violeta Barrios de Chamorro and her National Opposition Union soundly defeated Daniel Ortega's Sandinista regime in Nicaragua's presidential and legislative elections. Representing a coalition of 14 disparate political parties, known by its Spanish acronym, UNO, Mrs. Chamorro overcame an array of enormous obstacles to defeat the incumbent Sandinistas.

The Sandinistas couldn't save themselves from humiliating defeat even by resorting to flagrant improprieties such as using state resources for political proselytizing, limiting the opposition to token TV access, intimidating its supporters, harassing its campaign activities and hampering its means to raise campaign funds. More ominous yet, a former Sandinista, who worked as a secretary at the national electoral council, confirmed that "the Sandinistas wanted to rig the computers that counted the votes."

Protected by a secret ballot and more than 2,000 international observers, a solid majority of Nicaragua's voters — nearly 60% — rejected the Sandinistas and what they stand for. A decade of Ortega's brand of repressive Marxist-Leninist social engineering had plunged the country into civil war and economic ruin. Thousands of political dissenters died violent deaths and the turmoil in Nicaragua sent countless others into exile. An annual hyperinflation rate of 36,000% coupled with gross mismanagement left Nicaragua's once-vibrant economy all but destroyed.

The widow of popular newspaper publisher Pedro Joaquin Chamorro (whose assassination in 1979 sparked the Sandinista-led revolution), Dona Violeta, as Chamorro is reverentially called, was later chosen to lead a coalition of parties against

Picking Up the Pieces in Nicaragua

Text & Photos by
Steve Salisbury



SOF Senior Foreign Correspondent Steve Salisbury with Nicaraguan President Dona Violeta Chamorro, 10 June 1991. Despite rumors of an assassination plot against Chamorro, Salisbury found security almost casual. Photo: Panilo Zacayo

the Sandinista monolith.

This led weak opposition parties ranging from Trotskyite Sandinista rivals to conservative businessmen to come together in the common goal of defeating Daniel Ortega. Dona Violeta was chosen as the ideal person to unify their bickering forces and forge a strong alliance to free Nicaragua from its Sandinista stranglehold.

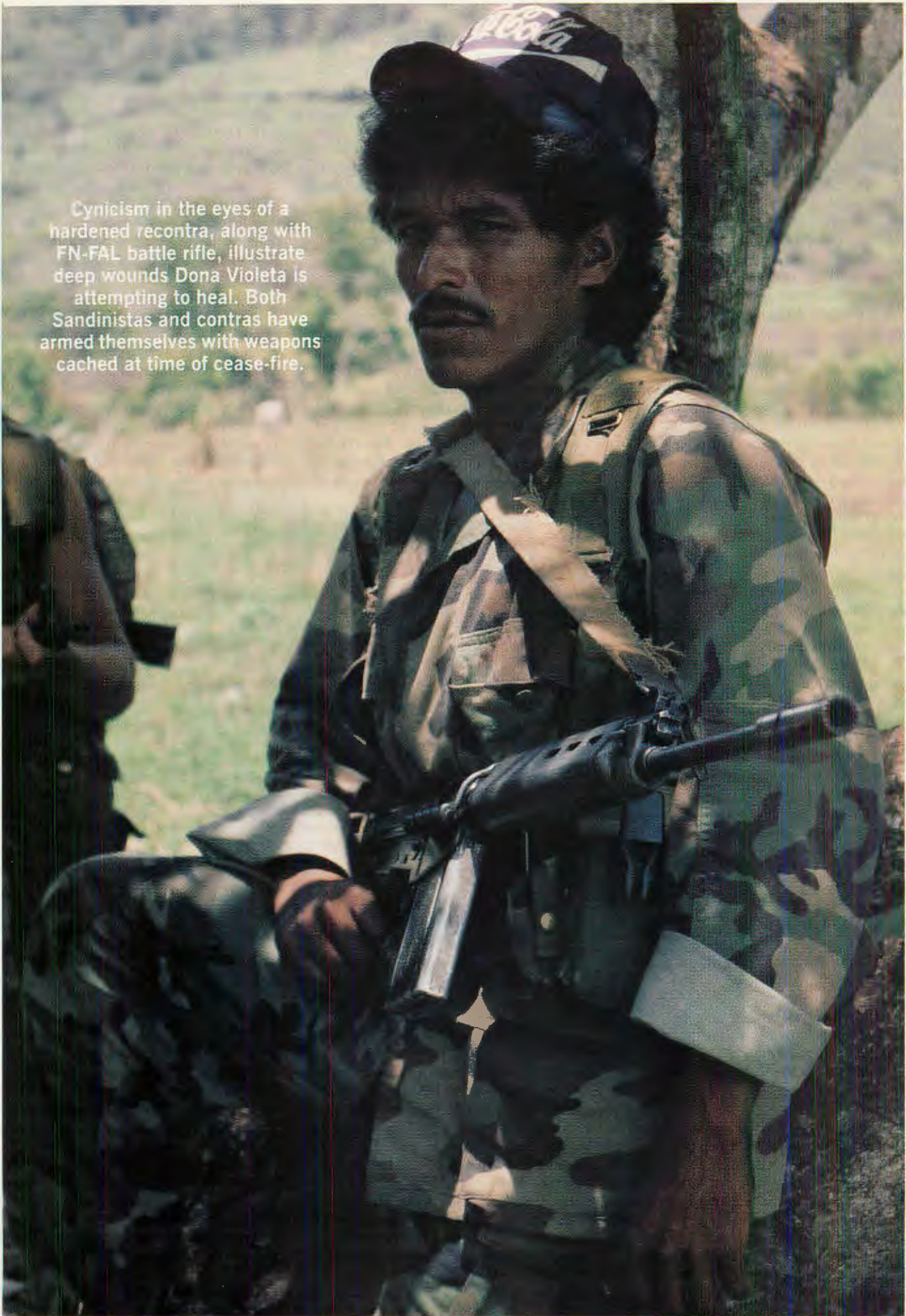
As she campaigned in her white dress, hobbling on crutches with a broken leg, the widow Chamorro symbolized Nicaragua's suffering, courage, and hopes for peace. In devastatingly sharp contrast to the Sandinistas, Dona Violeta had proven her deep commitment to democracy.

Adios, Traitors

In the heady days of the revolution's triumph, the popular Dona Violeta accepted the Sandinistas' pluralistic gesture to join their fledgling ruling junta. She resigned from the junta in 1980 ostensibly for health reasons, but really because the Sandinistas had broken their promises to establish democracy and were leading Nicaragua down the path of Stalinism with the help of Fidel Castro. "I left the junta because they (the Sandinistas) are traitors," she was quoted as saying years later.

This was Dona Violeta's only experience in government before becoming president. Like Corazon Aquino in the Philippines, she spent most of her adult life as a housewife until her husband's assassination thrust her into a leadership position in her country's crusade for democracy and social justice. She accepted the challenge, first by supervising the family newspaper, and later by stepping into the political arena.

While her resume was short on technical



Cynicism in the eyes of a hardened recontra, along with FN-FAL battle rifle, illustrate deep wounds Dona Violeta is attempting to heal. Both Sandinistas and contras have armed themselves with weapons cached at time of cease-fire.

experience, Dona Violeta demonstrated a quality that Nicaraguan voters yearned for: the gift of reconciliation. She has held her family together against all odds; two of her children are Sandinista militants and two are ardent anti-Sandinistas — one a former political director of the contras — yet they occasionally all dine together and leave politics aside.

Dona Violeta stresses now that her task is the total reconciliation of the whole “Nicaraguan family.” It is a Herculean mission, given the legacy of hate and polarization left by the Sandinistas and civil war. But even her critics concede that she has made great progress toward this goal.

Since Dona Violeta was inaugurated president last year, the war has ended and the contras have demobilized and reentered civilian life. Now there is unhampered freedom of speech and association, and the dreaded Sandinista Defense Committees (the “eyes and ears of the revolution” which controlled life in neighborhoods, hamlets and farms) and State Security (the Sandinista version of the KGB) have been disbanded. The Sandinista armed forces and police have been substantially reduced and the draft has been terminated. Ration cards have disappeared, free markets have emerged, and the economy shows positive signs of recovery.

Still there are serious problems, principally: the desperate state of the economy, the lack of justice, property disputes, and the Sandinistas who looted state and private property during the transition to the new government. There is also the Sandinista-inspired unrest, which has taken the form of strikes, demonstrations, and armed occupations of government buildings and private radio stations.

In The Wake Of Karl

Offices of the political parties which comprise UNO have been bombed in an attempt to intimidate the government. Efforts are currently underway to depoliticize and professionalize a Marxist-indoctrinated military and police force, whose loyalty to the government has long been suspect, as well as to disarm a population already armed to the teeth.

Government officials estimate that as many as 100,000 automatic rifles and other

combat weapons are illegally in the hands of civilians. Crime is rampant. As of June, sporadic violence in the countryside over land disputes and “settling scores” has left 59 former contras and their sympathizers dead, according to former Resistance leaders. Sandinistas claim at least 50 of their supporters have been killed. Sandinista troops and police have been implicated in killing former contras, yet they have gone unpunished according to the dead men’s comrades.

Expressing fear of Sandinista persecution, former contras have rearmed themselves with weapons from caches hidden at the end of the war. Depending on which estimates you choose to believe, as many as 1,100 are currently roaming rural areas in small groups, with no unified organization and little or no contact or coordination among the bands.

Known as “recontras,” they claim that the Chamorro government’s efforts at reconciliation have gone to the extreme of “co-governing” with the Sandinistas, particularly with General Humberto

complete government fulfillment of accords where the contras demobilized on the condition of receiving land, economic and humanitarian assistance, representation in government ministries, and guarantees for physical security.

Recontras have threatened to go back to war against the Sandinistas if their demands aren’t met. Meanwhile, Daniel Ortega has warned of a “social explosion” if “revolutionary conquests,” such as Sandinista control of the armed forces are threatened by UNO-sponsored laws. It remains to be seen if Dona Violeta’s charismatic personality and formidable powers of reconciliation will be enough to bring peace to her long-suffering country.

In an exclusive interview with *Soldier of Fortune Magazine*, President Chamorro recently talked with me about reconciliation, her government’s performance, and the problems it has been facing.

I encountered no visible security, except for a couple of plainclothes agents posted at metal detectors, as I arrived for the interview. I was unescorted as I followed directions to her personal secretary’s office prior to the presidential dispatch (astonishing in light of some government officials’ claim to have uncovered a plot by rightist extremists, including disgruntled former contras, to assassinate the president and some of her cabinet ministers).

The Sandinistas cleaned out virtually everything from the president’s office just prior to Dona Violeta’s moving in. The office was modestly, though tastefully, decorated with framed photographs of family, friends and dignitaries. There were also plaques, mementos and the blue and white flag of Nicaragua. She sat behind a large, cluttered desk, her short silver and ivory hair elegantly

matching her white blouse.

Dona Violeta had just returned from medical treatment in the United States for her leg. Her voice was hoarse, her face pale and slightly drawn, but her enthusiastic and forceful answers displayed her resilient character. I found Dona Violeta to be a charming, affable woman, more comfortable talking about the broad picture of her yearning for peace than the nitty-gritty business of achieving it.

She is confident of her role as peacemaker and exudes a passionate determination not to allow her country to



ABOVE: A recontra stands protectively in front of Nicaraguan women and children. These former contras are reluctant to “come in from the cold” in light of their country’s continuing turmoil, and have again taken up arms against the Sandinistas.



ABOVE: Former contras, now police, in Villa Sandino, Chontales Province. Of the 11,500 National Police in Nicaragua, only about 300 are former contras — the rest are Sandinistas.



Daniel Ortega, former president of Nicaragua (in blue shirt), displays defiant fist to crowd of Sandinistas. After suffering a humiliating defeat at polls, Ortega and followers have done everything possible to sabotage Chamorro’s government.

Ortega, Daniel Ortega’s brother, who remains chief of the Sandinista armed forces. Recontra sentiments are shared by a faction of UNO led by Vice President Virgilio Godoy, whose outspokenness has reportedly resulted in his exclusion from government policy making.

They demand the firing of General Ortega and an end to Sandinista control of the police and armed forces (constitutionally guaranteed during the Sandinista regime and which the new government probably doesn’t yet have the votes to repeal). The recontras also insist on

slide back into war. She dismissed the explosive potential of all the obstacles that stand in the way of her vision of national reconciliation with such emotion as to imply that the sheer act of negating the danger would diffuse it. Her critics wonder if Dona Violeta truly comprehends the peril of Nicaragua's serious problems.

One thing is clear talking to Dona Violeta: she avoids getting bogged down in complicated details. She delegates the nuts and bolts of resolving thorny problems to an impressively bright cabinet of technocrats (many U.S.-educated) led by her son-in-law, Antonio Lacayo. While imbued with their boss's mission, they are more pragmatic than idealistic.

But Dona Violeta's idealism guiding her government's pragmatism has been the key to Nicaraguans experiencing life without war or dictatorship for the first time in memory. Nicaragua's compassionate and amiable matriarch has set a fine and peaceful example for the people of her country to follow.

Here are excerpts from our 45-minute conversation:

Salisbury: *Senora presidente*, how do you evaluate the situation in Nicaragua since you became president? What are the principal achievements of your government and its greatest problems?

Chamorro: Well, in the first place, I evaluate my government as a success. Here we were, living (under the

Sandinista regime) a life of sadness, a life of rationing, in a frightening crisis of war. War is something tremendous. No one likes war. At the hour that I became president, my goal, my desire, my love, was to stop the war.

What is better than to stop a war and put an end to the killing? And the war was stopped. And how was the war stopped? By talking, *senor*. It wasn't stopped with a cannon, nor with a rifle, but by talking. Nicaragua doesn't want war. Nicaragua wants reconciliation among the Nicaraguans. Stopping the war and living in a democracy — those are foremost of my accomplishments.

Doing away with those sorry ration cards was important, as was reducing the size of the army. There were 86,000 men in uniform when I took office and now there are around 26,000. I don't have the exact figure, but this is the truth.

There have been great changes in Nicaragua, including amnesty and freedom of the press. There are strikes, but

this too is part of democracy. Before, there were no such freedoms, neither in the time of Somoza nor in the time of *Sandinismo*.

I say this to you because I am 61 years old and I've lived through it. What's of foremost importance to me is that any Nicaraguan may come and go freely, that he may feel happy without fear of persecution. And now Nicaragua is changing, like all the socialist countries. Everything is changing. Have you been in Nicaragua before? I imagine that you have seen a change. We go step by step, slow to make changes because the country was completely stalled in bankruptcy under the Sandinistas. For me, that was the worst — the war and the economic crisis.

We are still in an economic crisis. But, thank God, there are friendly countries willing to help us. We just received a donation of \$360 million. And that was

depends on the approval of the chief of the high command of the Sandinista armed forces, General Humberto Ortega.

Chamorro: No.

Salisbury: What is the decision-making process of your government?

Chamorro: The chief, uh, how do you call it? ("minister of defense," an aid interjects). I'm the minister of defense as well as the president. *Senor Humberto Ortega* is there for the time that I see it convenient. We are here for a reconciliation and not for a confrontation. We are working for democracy in Nicaragua, and that is a constructive thing. There is no business that the army or the Sandinistas command. I, along with my general government and assembly, my cabinet, are the ones who command. We are the ones who are lifting this country from the disgraceful state in which we received it.

Salisbury: The demobilized contras say that you haven't totally fulfilled the peace agreements (where they were to disarm and rejoin civilian society on the condition of receiving land, assistance and guarantees protecting them from Sandinista reprisals), especially in the sense that they feel fear for their physical safety.

Chamorro: The accords haven't been completely fulfilled because the former contras continue returning from former base camps in Honduras and Costa Rica. But it is important for them to immediately go and get



Chamorro told SOF she would like to take all weapons cached by contras and destroy them. If contras such as these don't get what they fought for, however, their weapons will be uncached. Photo: SOF file

achieved by talking, by knocking on the doors of our friends, by going to them and meeting with them.

The money will be used to pay our debt to the banks. Thus, the banks will continue to lend us money. That will enable the people to be productive, to plant crops on their land. Now there are thousands of people who have land who didn't have land before — people who have left the Sandinista army, as well as those of the Resistance.

Salisbury: Yes, the change that has been made in Nicaragua is considerable, but still, as you have pointed out, there are serious problems.

Chamorro: And how are there not going to be serious problems? There have to be.

Salisbury: The Sandinistas form the ranks of the armed forces and dominate the national police. There is criticism that the Sandinistas still have the real power because they have the arms, and that the exercise of executive power largely

help. There is an office that is called the Office of Repatriation where they can present themselves and help is given to them. Those who don't present themselves are not helped because no one knows who or where they are.

Salisbury: What is this question of recontras (former contras who have rearmed) expressing their fear of Sandinista persecution and their hopes that taking up arms again and threatening military action will pressure Dona Violeta's government "to comply" with the agreements that led to the Resistance's demobilization?

Chamorro: Here there is not a question of recontras, my dear. I want to explain something to you. That is propaganda. They are called recontras, all because they carry a rifle. I wish I had the money so I could buy all of their arms and be finished with it. He (a former combatant from either side) who comes here, does so

Continued on page 112

ANATOMY OF A POW/MIA SCAM

by Chuck Fremont



Photo: Gamma/Liaison



Photo: Gamma/Liaison



Photo: Gamma/Liaison

(L to R): Col. John L. Robertson, USAF; Lt. Larry Stevens, USN; Maj. Albro L. Lundy, USAF. TOP: Photo allegedly taken of them somewhere in Indochina in 1990. SOF determined bogus photo probably originated in crude lab in Vietnam.

16 September 1966: Air Force Colonel John Robertson's F-4 Phantom is shot down over North Vietnam. Status: KIA.



Photo: DoD

6 July 1971: Army Special Forces Captain Donald Carr is lost over Laos during a reconnaissance flight. Status: MIA.

14 February 1969: Navy Lieutenant Larry Stevens' A-6 Intruder fails to return from mission over Laos. Status: MIA.

24 December 1970: Major Albro Lundy, USAF, bails out of his damaged A1E Skyraider over Laos. Status: MIA; later changed to KIA by review panel.

January 1973: Operation Homecoming. North Vietnam releases 591 American POWs.

Robert K. Brown had seen it before. A grainy photo of three middle-aged Caucasian men, smiling, well-fed, grouped around a cryptic sign. Allegedly taken in Cambodia, the photo was said to show three American aviators, held captive for more than 20 years.

When the photo hit the national press on a slow news day in July, Brown got on the horn to a long-time friend. "Mongoose," active in the continuing fight for freedom in communist Southeast Asia, had first seen the photo, along with Brown, in October 1990. An American journalist working in Thailand obtained it from a Cambodian "businessman" near Site 2, a refugee settlement in Thailand. The Cambodian claimed the POWs were being held near Phnom Penh.

Mongoose thought the photo was bogus, but he passed it to appropriate contacts in the U.S. intelligence community. They confirmed his assessment and returned the photo. He filed it away. Mongoose later learned that the journalist also sent copies to the families of Major Albro Lundy and Colonel John Robertson, Air Force pilots lost in Indochina. Family members passed copies to William "Billy" Hendon and Jack Bailey, longtime POW/MIA activists. One of these men apparently passed the photo to Eugene "Red" McDaniel, who released the photo to the press, claiming that the U.S. government was suppressing this "evidence" of live POWs.

"This is just one more scam coming out of the cottage industry in phony POW reports in Southeast Asia," Mongoose told Brown. "These hustlers figure if a live POW

is worth \$1 million U.S., a picture or letter, or even a rumor, should be worth at least a few bucks.

"It's no accident that Robertson and Stevenson were named as the POWs in the

photo," Mongoose continued. "Thousands of leaflets offering a reward for POW information were floated into Laos by balloons from Thailand and given to Cambodians to launch into the Mekong in 1989.

"Robertson's and Stevenson's names were on those leaflets, along with computer-aged photos. Robertson's name was misspelled on the flier. Guess what? His name was misspelled identically on a letter that he was supposed to have written from some forced-labor farm."

"What's their official status?" Brown asked Mongoose.

"Robertson was carried KIA/BNR (body not recoverable). His back-seater punched out when they were hit, but Robertson never got out. His wingman followed him in, confirmed that the F-4 Phantom exploded on contact with Robertson still on board. Stevens went down in an A-6 Intruder over Laos; he was carried MIA. No one ever came out of Laos; not one POW. The Pathet Lao have stonewalled us ever since the war.

"And Lundy was lost in Laos too," Mongoose added. "He was a 'Sandy'; flew Skyraiders in support of 'Pony Express,' the Jolly Greens on search and rescue missions. They'd go in low and slow; orbit while the PJs (pararescuemen) went in on the pick-up. Lundy reported engine trouble and bailed out. The other four Sandys all saw the parachute open, but they said the harness was empty. They figured he'd unhooked the leg straps. Those guys would do crazy stuff in those big cockpits to get comfortable; they were up there four or five hours sometimes."

"But they never found his body?" Brown asked.

"No. They sent in the PJs at the crash site; no trace. Never even picked



Indochina. Ho Chi Minh considered Laos, Kampuchea (Cambodia) and Vietnam one country; His Secret U.S. operations in Laos and Cambodia, necessary to Interdict supply lines known as Ho Chi Minh Trail, may have prevented full disclosure of fate of servicemen lost there.



Photo: Gamma/Liaison

Families of POW/MIAs have had false hopes raised too many times by bogus reports and photos. But the U.S. government owes these families a complete accounting of everything that is reliably known.

October 1990: SOF source in Thailand obtains photo of three Caucasians from Chinese man who claims men are POWs being held near Phnom Penh. Photo is determined to be bogus.

November 1990: Shelley Robertson Quast, elder daughter of Colonel Robertson, flies to Phnom Penh. William "Billy" Hendon accompanies her. Quast believes one of the men in photo is her father.

16 July 1991: McDaniel releases photo to national media. Robertson, Lundy and Stevens are identified by family members as the men in the photo. Speculation focuses on mysterious sign.

Oct/Nov 1990: Second copy of photo is obtained by Eugene "Red" McDaniel. SOF sources name Jack Bailey as McDaniel's source.

November 1990: McDaniel shows "POW photo" to congressmen and senators. Defense Intelligence Agency dismisses photo as bogus.

19 July: SOF source breaks "code" of sign, determines location referred to is in Vietnam; that men in photo are probably Soviets.

IS DONALD CARR ALIVE?



Army Capt. Donald Carr in 1961.

United States Army Special Forces Captain Donald G. "Butch" Carr has been missing since disappearing 15 miles inside Laos in 1971. Jack Bailey, a retired Air Force colonel and POW/MIA activist, has obtained color photos he said are of Carr, and were taken by "a close associate of a Laotian government official" in Laos in 1990. Bailey said he has the original negatives.

Michael Charney, a forensic anthropologist widely respected for using skeletal remains and a process called photo-superimposition to verify or refute identities in difficult cases, said "there is no doubt in my mind" that the purported POW in the color photograph is of Capt. Carr.

Comparing that photo with one of Carr at his wedding in 1961, when he was 23, Charney and Patrick A. Fitzhorn, an engineer who uses state-of-the-art computers

sponsored by the National Science Foundation, scanned and digitized both pictures. Accurate to within one-hundredth of an inch, the computer outlined pertinent landmarks on both faces — the young Carr in red and the older man in black — and superimposed one over the other.

"I've been working with Dr. Charney for four years and I was shocked at how well these matched," Fitzhorn told SOF. The brow ridges, ear shapes, eye sockets, hairline contour, facial muscles and even the smile in both photos indicate the same man is in both photos, Charney said.

Charney and Fitzhorn would not preclude the possibility that the purported photo is a highly sophisticated computerized composite, although they said that was "unlikely." The next step in verifying the purported Carr photo would be examination of the original negatives by experts in computerized photographic forgery to authenticate them as genuine. Bailey said he would make the negatives available for further scrutiny, but "only in closed session." Stay tuned.

—Jim Pate



Photo allegedly taken in Laos in 1990.

up a distress signal. They carried him MIA, but the review board changed it to KIA later on. Stevens I don't know about, but the bottom line on Lundy and Robertson is they bought the farm."

"Well, if this latest photo is bogus, I want to blow it out of the sky," Brown told Mongoose. "It's just causing more anguish for the families, and these bullshit reports discredit the legitimate investigators; make anyone concerned with POW/MIA's look like a nut. And that's wrong."

Mongoose went to work on a detailed analysis of the photo. He talked to sources in the U.S. intelligence community, but

they were of little help. In the end, it was his 10 years of on-the-ground experience in Southeast Asia and close contacts with the Vietnamese and Laotian expatriate community in the U.S. that told him who the men were and where the mysterious photo originated. He called Brown back the next day — Friday, 19 July 1991.

Mongoose told Brown that the photo probably originated in communist Vietnam. "This sign in the photograph locates it in Lam Dong province, near Da Lat in Vietnam's Central Highlands. The Vietnamese write a date with a location preceding it; the 'LD' in front of the date

RKB ON PHOTO

"I regret having to dash the hopes of the families of these servicemen. But the people creating these hoaxes are vermin. They are sharp; I've been scammed by them, and I'm not emotionally involved, though I care deeply about the POW/MIA issue and feel there are unresolved questions.

The Pentagon has not been forthcoming with all of the families. But just because Westerners are in Vietnam doesn't prove there are still POWs over there. Europeans caught smuggling drugs, for instance, may be misidentified as POWs. And you have the "stay-behinds," Americans who for a variety of reasons — loyalty to Vietnamese or Montagnard comrades; marriage to a Vietnamese woman; whatever — decided to stay in Southeast Asia. Twenty-two stay-behinds have been reliably reported.

The Pentagon did not go after POW/MIA information in a timely manner. They let the trail cool for 17 years. The "Stony Beach" team finally went over about three years ago. This was the first group authorized to pay informants for information. The trail was very cold before the Pentagon got serious.

It's a complex, murky issue, and there are reports that are hard to discount. Unfortunately, these criminal hoaxes discredit the whole POW/MIA issue, both with the press and in Washington. But this particular photo is just another cruel scam."

stands for Lam Dong," according to Mongoose. "The word 'photo' at the top of the sign is clearly written as two words — 'PHO TO' — this is a distinctly Vietnamese linguistic style," he said.

"What about the periods separating the date?" Brown asked. "I've never seen Americans write a date like that."

"Right. Now, the next line is 'NNTK.' 'TK' stands for *thieu khu*, Vietnamese for 'small unit,' as in a military unit. I believe the 'NN' stands for *nhân nguia*, which is the designation for a civil engineering-

20 July: SOF Editor/Publisher Robert K. Brown issues press release labeling photo as bogus.

21 July: Story breaks in Colorado papers that SOF has labeled photo a phony.



Photo: DoD

25 July: U.S. Dept. of Defense links Robinson/Lundy/Stevens photo to known counterfeiters of POW reports; states that information accompanying photo is bogus. U.S. Senate holds hearing to form select committee on POW/MIAs.

22 July: Associated Press carries story of Brown's debunking of photo. Story breaks of another alleged POW photo, purportedly showing Navy flier Daniel Borah, shot down near Quang Tri in '72. Photo is apparently supplied by Jack Bailey's organization.

23 July: Another "POW photo" surfaces, purportedly showing Army Captain Donald Carr. Source: Jack Bailey, via unnamed Laotian contacts. This photo is closest match yet to actual photo of a missing serviceman.



Photo: DoD

THE PLAYERS

A myriad cast of characters has been involved in the quest for information on American POW/MIAs in Indochina. We can't look at all of them, but here are glimpses at a few.

Good Guys: The individual we refer to as "Mongoose" in the main story spent almost 10 years on the ground in Indochina. Now retired from government service, he continues to support indigenous freedom fighters. Mongoose is the most credible source on POW/MIAs in Southeast Asia that SOF is aware of.

Zealots: Eugene "Red" McDaniel, a retired U.S. Navy captain, heads the American Defense Institute (ADI) in Alexandria, Virginia. McDaniel, a former POW, has offered a million-dollar reward for the return of a live American POW. The Defense Intelligence Agency has accused ADI of raising money through "totally unfounded claims." McDaniel believes in what he is doing, but his judgment has been questioned.

Hucksters: Jack Bailey, a retired Air Force colonel, does not have a good reputation with POW/MIA families due to his fund-raising schemes. In fact, SOF received a solicitation from his group soon after the story broke on the alleged Robertson/Lundy/Stevens photo. In the early 1980s, Bailey ran a "boat people" rescue operation out of Thailand. His craft, the *Akuna III*, was deemed a hazard by Thai authorities. Robert K. Brown once sailed on it. "It was a floating disaster," he recalled.

— C.F.

type outfit, like our Navy Seabees. Next line is 'KBC 19,' which stand for *Kha Buu Chinh 19*. This is the Vietnamese equivalent to an APO or a military postal address. KBC 19, as I recall, was a Vietnamese address in Cam Ranh."

Since 1975, Cam Ranh Bay has been a major base for Soviet Far East forces. The Da Lat/Lam Dong area is often visited by Soviet personnel assigned to Cam Ranh.

Mongoose consulted with authorities on the Soviet Union regarding the clothing

and general appearance of the men in the photo. "The man to the right, identified as possibly being Larry Stevens," Mongoose said, "is wearing a Stalin style tunic. My Soviet expert identified this tunic, and specifically the points beneath the buttons on the breast pockets, as being distinctly Russian. The high collar and lack of epaulets are characteristic of a Cossack tunic, which was adopted as a Soviet field fatigue uniform. The other men wear darker clothing, possibly naval uniforms. One appears to have a hat under his hand. The haircuts, round faces and mustaches are consistent with Soviet or Eastern European appearance. And these individuals just look too healthy to be prisoners. Most POWs lost hair, lost body mass, lost muscle mass. These guys are pretty chubby.

"There are problems with the sign. There is a black box — or a blocked-out area — below it. On the left-hand side, it looks like there was airbrushing or blocking done to the photograph below the sign. The sign looks like it was superimposed and then air brushed to make it look like part of the photograph.

"My conclusion is that the men are Soviets, possibly in an extremely old picture that was reworked in an unsophisticated Vietnamese lab. The Vietnamese added the sign that appears on the photograph to date it for use as a POW scam, based on the flier that was floated all over from Laos," Mongoose told Brown. "The sign, in fact, is probably nothing more than an identification note conveniently taken from the back of another photograph in the lab that created the forgery."

SOF back issues on POW/MIAs: June '81 (World War II, Korea, Vietnam); Spring '83 (POW/MIA Special); Nov. '84 (firsthand POW story); Jan. '82 & Aug. '85 (Liberty City); July '86 (Army cover-up); May '91 (Korea); Aug. '91 (POW chief resigns). Limited availability.

Chuck Fremont is an Army Special Forces Reserve NCO. ✕

LIBERTY CITY



Robert K. Brown with anti-communist guerrillas near his Laotian outpost in 1981. "Liberty City" was forward base for possible POW extraction. Photo: SOF file

For five months in 1981, Robert K. Brown funded a private "A" Team camp in northwestern Laos. "Liberty City" was a forward base for a possible POW extraction. Brown spent roughly \$250,000 building the camp and arming its garrison.

Liberty City began with a visit by H'mong General Vang Pao to Boulder, Colorado, in early 1981. In return for assistance on bringing the "yellow rain" issue to world attention and arming a battalion of his men, the general promised to turn over remains of American MIAs to Brown.

Brown dispatched a team to Thailand. Debriefings of H'mong and Lao sources yielded evidence of American POWs in Laos, and the decision was made to go in. Indications were that the POWs' freedom could be purchased from a Lao warlord.

No POWs were recovered during the Liberty City operation, but Brown learned a lot about POW/MIA scams. Variations of the Lao warlord story have continued to come out of Indochina. Laos has been the focus of much attention, since the Pathet Lao never released a single American POW. Secret operations were the norm in Laos, so tracking the fate of servicemen missing there is difficult. But SOF tried.

—C.F.

MOUNTAIN EXODUS

A Step Ahead of Death in Kurdistan

Text & Photos by Patrick O'Donnell

FROM the beginning it had seemed like a crazy idea; that was OK, crazy things had worked out before. But at the river's edge at midnight, with quicksand and Turkish army searchlights and 60 meters of very fast, deep water to get across, it was clear even to us that this thing could go beyond crazy. Whether by getting shot or drowning or being sucked irretrievably into the gray-brown ooze, there was a very serious downside to this situation.

My associate (hereafter identified as "K") and I had made up our minds to try to get into Iraqi Kurdistan two weeks earlier, over lunch in Washington, D.C., but we'd figured at that point that the worst that could happen to us would be a couple of days in a Turkish jail if we didn't make it. Now, suddenly, we had vivid images of our bullet-riddled bodies washing up on the banks of the Tigris River somewhere north of Baghdad.

K had been in-country a week ahead of me and sent word that he'd made some sort of contact. I'd fallen in with six British ex-paratroopers who were also trying to get into Iraq. They claimed they were delivering medical supplies from Mother Theresa and had T-shirts with her picture on them to prove it. I knew one of them from Peshawar, Pakistan, where he and his buddy had been thrown out of the American Club bar for spitting on some Samoan Kiwi Special Forces guys about four times their size. At the time, he'd been doing video camera work in Afghanistan for one of the networks. The Mother Theresa story sounded perfectly reasonable to me.

On the afternoon of 28 March, we arrived in the Turkish town of Cisre, about 20km from the border, and checked into what looked like the best hotel. More accurately, the police checked us in. They were stopping anyone who looked like a potential border runner/journalist. I figured by this time K was either inside Iraq with the Kurds, held someplace this side of the border by the Turks or somewhere entirely different. The last time we'd talked, he'd been in the city of Diyarbakir, about 160km to the northwest, and had said something about enormous obstacles and a fallback plan involving Yugoslavia.

Just in case, I asked the man at the hotel desk if any other Americans had been through town recently. "Just one," he said. I asked him if he knew where I might find the guy. The desk man pointed to the ceiling and said, "Room 215." I asked Mother Theresa's commandos to excuse me a moment and headed upstairs. I found 215 and knocked. A wild-eyed individual answered the door. It was K.

"I knew you'd be here," he said. "Everybody trying to get across the border ends up here, but you almost missed it. We're leaving now." I noticed he held a full backpack in one hand. "Let me just go downstairs and get my passport," I said. K shook his head from side to side. "Sorry, gotta go now." "I'm just gonna get my damn passport!" I repeated. More head shaking from K. "Gotta go NOW! We're already two minutes behind schedule!"



Over his shoulder I could see two other very stressed people, also gripping backpacks and camera bags. As it turned out, the three of them (the other two were journalists — a Turkish reporter and a French video cameraman) had been holed up in that room for four days, hiding from the police and waiting for the Kurds to set up the border crossing. My happening along at that moment was just one of those

Kurdish refugees fled in anything that would drive as they retreated just ahead of Iraqi army.



Captured Iraqi is led into building where he will be tried and executed.



MODERN KURDISH HISTORY

Kurdistan has no official borders; the Kurds live in mountainous parts of Iraq, Turkey, Syria, Iran and the Soviet Union. Population estimates vary from 14 to 28 million people spread over this wide area. Most Kurds are Sunni Moslems and farmers. Over the years, many Kurds have died trying to secure a homeland.

1920 After World War I, colonial powers in the Treaty of Sevres pledge to establish a unified, independent Kurdish homeland, but the treaty is never validated.

1925 Kurds rise up against the Turkish government, but their insurrection is quickly put down.

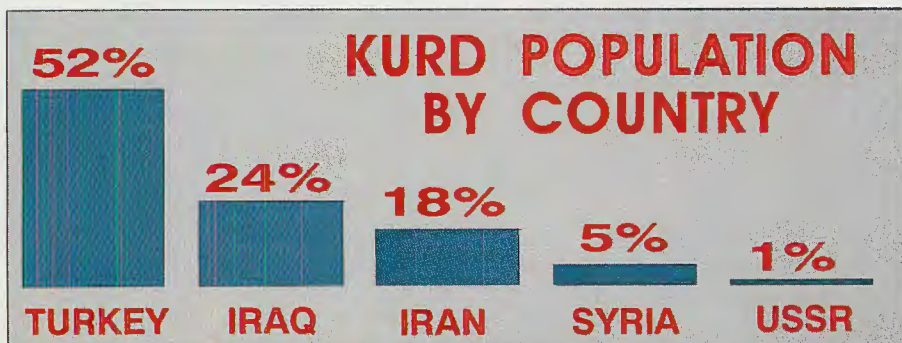
1946 Soviets back Kurds in forming of a republic in Iran called Mahabad, but when Soviets pull out, the republic is quickly overthrown by Iranians.

1961 Organized resistance begins against Iraqi authority, led by Mustafa Barzani, father of current Kurd leader Massoud Barzani.

1974-75 Kurds fight against Iraqis with support of Shah of Iran. Saddam Hussein makes a deal with the Shah and Iran abandons the Kurds in exchange for access to the Persian Gulf.

1988 Saddam Hussein punishes Kurds for support of Iran during Iran-Iraq War by destroying thousands of villages and using poison gas against villagers. As many as 5,000 villagers are left dead.

1991 Taking advantage of Hussein's defeat by Coalition forces in Operation Desert Storm, Kurds liberate major northern cities. But by March Iraqi army has crushed rebellion and hundreds of thousands of Kurds flee Saddam Hussein's vengeance, crossing borders into Iran and Turkey or taking refuge in the mountains.



Author's route took him from Cisre in southeastern Turkey, across border and south toward Kirkuk, then back as Iraqi military retook Kurdish territory. Shaded area shows general area of Kurdistan.

things.

We hurried out the back door to avoid the police who'd escorted the Brits and me to the hotel. Behind the hotel, a Renault sedan was waiting with the engine running. We got in, laid down on the seats, and the driver took off.

We drove nearly an hour that way, switching back and forth from paved roads to dirt tracks, stopping once to change cars. It felt like the driver was doing 90 miles per on the road and a moderate 70 on the dirt.

Twenty minutes after dark, the car stopped at the end of a mud track. Two Kurdish guerrillas were waiting for us, armed with Kalashnikovs. We got our gear out of the car and started walking/running up the first of many hillsides. The hike lasted four hours. Pascal, the French cameraman, had done some Afghan time himself, and he and I exchanged reminiscences of stumbling across the Hindu Kush by night.

Sometime after 2300 hours we came to a ridge looking down on a fairly wide river, a tributary of the Tigris. The far bank was Iraq. There was a substantial looking Turkish army encampment a little ways upstream, surrounded by guard towers with lights. The Peshmerga, as the Kurdish fighters are called, gestured for us to crouch down.

Hot Little Guerrilla War

In southeastern Turkey, the army has for some years been engaged in an anti-insurgency campaign against Turkish Kurdish guerrillas, who have the sympathy of a large part of the area's predominantly Kurdish population. The Turkish government, which euphemistically refers to the Kurds as "Mountain Turks," has taken steps (which include outlawing the use of the Kurdish language) to suppress the Kurds, and has gotten for its trouble a hot little guerrilla war. As well as popular sympathy, the Turkish Kurdish rebels have automatic weapons, Soviet-made RPGs and a hefty stock of high explosives, all of which they use against army outposts like the one that lay before us.

Here we were, skulking around an army post's perimeter in the darkness, a bit too far away for them to read our press credentials, but well within rifle range. I crouched as low as I possibly could.

Using bushes and rocks for cover, we made our way down toward the water. The closer we got to the river, the soggy the terrain became until finally, we were half walking, half crawling through about a foot of mud. I was behind K, trying hard to keep my camera bag out of the muck, when half of him suddenly disappeared.

He'd stepped into something other than the usual mud. In a second he was in it up to his waist and sinking deeper. Almost immediately, a Peshmerga extended a treebranch to him. It crossed my mind I may want to go back to the hotel.

Along the way, we'd gotten the impression that we'd cross the river on some kind of boat. I asked Vedat, the Turkish reporter who was our only means of communicating with the Peshmerga, where the boat was. He translated my question and listened to the answer. "There is no boat," he said. "Then how the hell do we get across the river?" I asked. More translations. "There is a kind of raft." Boat, raft, OK. "So where is this 'kind of' raft?" Translations again. One of the Peshmerga reached in his pack and produced a folded innertube from a truck tire. I looked at the river. It was about 60 meters wide and flowed like it was coming out of a giant fire hose.

We sat in the mud taking turns blowing air into the innertube. Then the Peshmerga tied treebranches across the top of it and we secured the cameras and rifles to it. Next, we stripped off and tied our clothes on top of the cameras. We all took our places on the raft and waded in, shivering badly (late March in the mountains is still pretty cold). When the water got shoulder-high we started kicking, still holding onto the raft, but right away the current caught us and we were off, moving downstream too fast to feel good about.

I thought we were losing control of the raft and said so. No one disagreed. Even if we didn't drown, we faced the risk of winding up cameraless and stark naked in Iraq. We all kept kicking and stroking frantically. One of the Peshmerga was repeating "Inshallah, Inshallah" (God willing, God willing). Finally, I felt the river bed beneath my feet. We'd made it. We were in Iraq.

We dragged the raft out of the river, unloaded our gear and dressed. Remarkably, all the cameras were OK. Back on the other side, the lights of the Turkish army post still probed the darkness, but that was no longer our concern. We were out of their jurisdiction, so to speak. As would soon become clear, however, we were now in Saddam's.

Early the next morning we arrived in the city of Zakhu, just a few kilometers south of the border. Two weeks earlier, the Kurdish rebels, led by Massoud Barzani and Jalal Talabani, had taken control of northern Iraq with stunning swiftness. The takeover had been accomplished with barely a shot fired. Of the five Iraqi divisions stationed in the north (three

others had been redeployed to the south to put down the Shi'ite revolt), only two had mounted even token resistance before surrendering. The other three had all been compromised in clandestine negotiations with the Kurds and had just waited for the signal to turn over their weapons.

After all, Saddam's forces had taken an unbelievable pounding during Desert Storm, and Coalition forces were occupying territory in the south, unopposed. It seemed only reasonable to assume Saddam was on the way out. But Saddam's apparent weakness, and the ease with which the Kurds had gained the upper hand were, as it would shortly become clear, fatally deceptive.

"Saddam Finished!"

When we entered Zakhu, the city was in a state of jubilation. It was like the scene in *The Wizard of Oz* when all the munchkins are running around singing that the wicked



Kurdish Resistance leader Jalal Talabani denied that Iraqi army was coming to retake his town, even as shells exploded nearby.

witch is dead (unfortunately, in this case, the wicked witch was busy reassembling a couple of armored divisions supported by gunships). There were Peshmerga and civilians alike firing "joy bullets" into the air from their Kalashnikovs, wasting thousands of rounds. "Saddam finished!" everyone was saying.

Somehow, word had arrived from the south that there'd been heavy fighting at the city of Kirkuk and that the Iraqi army and Republican Guard had been routed. Looking back, I think this incredibly overoptimistic view of things in the Kurdish areas had a lot to do with the utter panic that seized everyone when the army eventually did come north. It was like emptying your weapon into your worst enemy, watching him fall and lie still, and then, get up and come right back at you. Things like that really shake people up.

The next morning, 30 March, my three companions and I loaded into a commandeered van with about 10 other newsmen, and headed for Dahuk, the provincial capital of the northernmost province of Iraq. We'd been

assured that the city was securely in Kurdish Resistance control, and would be only a stopover before continuing south to the real front.

On the road from Zakhu to Dahuk, we got a good look at what six months of sanctions and 37 days of bombing can do to a country's transportation system. In the 50km between the cities we saw maybe half a dozen vehicles; some of them were things such as farm tractors and backhoes now being used to carry people. Our own transport stopped twice to repair well worn-tires that had gone flat. Additionally, road surfaces were cratered and bridges were gone.

We arrived in Dahuk about noon. The normal population of the city was about a quarter of a million. That day there were about 500 civilians in the whole place. Our Peshmerga suggested we stop here for lunch. As an extra, added attraction, Jalal Talabani, leader of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, also was in Dahuk and would give a speech.

Altogether there were about 25 foreign press people in Dahuk that day. Among them were a three-person BBC crew: Nick Dellacasa, his wife Roseanne and her brother Charles Maxwell. They stood out later in the memories of other journalists mainly because of Roseanne — attractive blonde women weren't a common sight in Kurdistan.

Deadly War For Journalists

That afternoon was the last time any of their colleagues would see them alive. Their

badly decomposed bodies were found in the mountains along the Turkish border two months later. Kurdish sources claimed they were killed by the Turkish military because they'd filmed the Turks firing on refugees. It was just about this time that Gad Gross, a young German freelance photographer, was being executed in Kirkuk, the city further south whose "liberation" had been celebrated in Zakhu the night before.

When others had pulled out in the path of the advancing Iraqi army, Gross and two companions opted to stick it out and cover the action. His friends were taken prisoner and released a few weeks later, but Gross, the first one taken, got a bullet from an Iraqi noncom who presumably didn't like foreign press. Gad Gross was 23.

After lunch, Talabani took his place at the head of a set of stairs in an abandoned government building. His audience were about 500 Peshmerga and the foreign journalists who'd just been his guests for lunch. The thrust of his talk was mainly that his forces had captured all of northern Iraq and were now preparing to march on



Baghdad. As he spoke, the first artillery rounds fell on the southern suburbs of the city.

Talabani ignored the incoming but addressed the question of the population's conspicuous absence with the explanation that Iraqi agents had gone from door to door through the city the day before spreading false rumors that the army was coming and would use chemical weapons. The agents had been apprehended and as soon as the people realized it was all a hoax they'd be back. But, as Talabani kept talking, the shells kept falling, providing a very articulate denial of his claim that all was well. Of course, the army was coming; they'd have the city in a little more than 24 hours.

After Talabani's performance, we got back in the van and headed south again, hoping we could get to Kirkuk and take a look for ourselves at the Kurdish victory. We slept at a place that night called Sheik Adey, about 30km south of Dahuk. We all hoped that by the next sundown we'd be at the front, which we assumed would be somewhere in the area of Kirkuk. As it turned out, we got our wish, but not in the place we expected to

Truck carrying 82 prisoners did a victory lap before depositing passengers at local prison.

find it.

The next morning our driver announced he'd go no further. We tried arguments and bribes, but nothing would change his mind. As we sat there on the road arguing with him, we noticed that the tide of traffic had suddenly reversed. We stopped one of the troop transports and asked if there was room for some journalists headed for Kirkuk. "No" we were told, but if we wanted to go north to Dahuk we should hop in. "But why go back up to Dahuk when the fighting is down in Kirkuk?" we asked.

And then it hit us. Somehow, since the afternoon a day before, Saddam's forces had outflanked the Kurds and were attacking Dahuk. Kirkuk was a lost cause, once again behind the government's lines. Come to think of it, if we didn't get that van turned around we'd be behind enemy lines too. We piled in and headed north.

It seemed logical (and was in fact true) that if the Iraqis had advanced so quickly, then they must have been in control of the



wide, well-paved highway running north from Mosul to Dahuk. The same road then continued to Zaku. Judging from the fairly flimsy defensive presence we'd seen in Dahuk, it was also quite possible that they'd roll right through there and keep going all the way to Zaku. This presented two problems for us.



Iraqi secret police captured by Kurds on their way to pay ultimate price for Saddam Hussein's atrocities.

The first was where to go to find whatever action was going to take place before it was over. The second was how to get out again. We decided to swing east

and then north on secondary roads that would bring us to another highway, one approaching Dahuk from the northeast. That way, if the Kurds couldn't hold, we could get out of the way of the Iraqi advance and make for the Turkish border in the far northeastern corner of Iraq. If we couldn't make that, well, there was always Iran.

It was now 31 March, Easter Sunday, about half an hour before sunset. I remember that because I was concerned I would lose light as we got into combat, and wouldn't be able to shoot pictures. There's nothing so pointless as a photographer going into battle with no light, except maybe doing it with no film. I had plenty of film.

Wicked Witch Isn't Dead

People we'd met on their way to the city were telling us it was all over, that the Iraqis had complete control of Dahuk, and were coming up the road after them. The van stopped on a stretch of road in a gorge, about 200 yards before a blind curve. We were just on the outskirts of the city, so we decided to wait a minute and just check things out. Half of us were



Kurdish Resistance fighter: Kurds fought valiantly, but with no radios or armor, they were hardly a match for Iraqi tanks.

saying the hell with it, let's drive on down, while the other half, including K and I, advocated a little recon on foot. That blind curve looked real ambushy, and some of us had someone somewhere to go home to.

Finally, a lone man came walking around the bend. He had a Kalashnikov over his shoulder. When he got to where we were he unlocked the magazine and showed it to us. It was empty. "I used all my bullets. Only then did I leave." The man said there was an Iraqi position about 400 meters on the other side of the curve. This was the end of the line for motorized transport. We got out with our gear and thanked the driver, wishing him luck in

finding his wife and kids.

About 20 Peshmerga had been watching us from the hills on either side of the gorge, and they now came down to the roadway. They confirmed the Iraqi position and said they were expecting friends who'd help them make an assault. We waited some more. All the photographers could feel the light fading with their eyes closed. Finally, two trucks came rolling down the road from the north. About 70 Peshmerga poured out, greeted the others and started folkdancing for Chrissakes.

At last, we formed up into squads and started down the road, climbing alongside the gorge. "Who is in command?" I asked the guerrilla nearest me. "No one is in command," he said, with a "what difference does it make?" sort of expression. Personally, I just like to know those things. Just about where the road turned, we picked up a little rifle fire. Everybody got respectfully lower to the ground but kept advancing, when *whoosh*, an RPG round came up between the two main Peshmerga, exploding on the roadway. If we'd been in the van, we'd have had that one up our butts for sure. As a founding member of the foot recon party, I felt thoroughly vindicated.

The Peshmerga, falling behind available cover, laid down fire on the rocket position with Kalashnikovs and PKs (squad automatic weapons). We were getting a lot back from the other side, but we kept gaining ground until we'd cleared the bend and were headed onto an open section of road, still curvy but with more visibility.

After a particularly heavy episode of enemy fire that had us flat down in the grass, I asked the Peshmerga closest to me just where the others were. It was dark now, and he looked at the tracers to the right and then the left, then back to me. He had no idea. In fact we were taking some fire from our own side. Rounds coming from behind were hitting the dirt a foot or two from where we lay.

When we reached the first Iraqi position we found four corpses and a lot of spent shells. By that time, about an hour into the fighting, the firing from both sides was winding down. The Iraqis apparently hadn't expected such a determined push from 100 guerrillas, and had pulled back to the next blind curve. We formed up again behind a concrete blockhouse at the side of the road. We'd suffered no casualties but had expended a lot of ammunition. The Peshmerga freely admitted they had no idea of the strength of the force into which they were advancing. After all, the enemy retreat could have been a feint to draw us into an ambush at the next turn. It seemed like a good time to sort these things out.

I laid down on the ground and tried to get a little sleep. The next thing I knew it was midnight and K was nudging me in the ribs. "Moving out," he said. While I'd

Continued on page 97

GUERRILLAS

Karens Battle Burmese on Morpokay Front Lines

Text & Photos by Peter Boczar

“Careful, they have a sniper,” a voice shouts as I clamber up the wooden ladder from a muddy trench into a timbered bunker above.

I am with guerrillas of the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA), faced-off with troops of the Socialist Republic of the Union of Burma. Our positions are separated by only about 50 meters.

I share the bunker with two soldiers, each appearing to be no older than 12. They are in open shirts, short pants and rubber flip-flops. Massive tattoos, designed to ward off sickness, bullets and evil spirits, decorate their arms and legs. Each sits in a nest of blooper rounds that fire from an M79 launcher. AK-47 assault rifles dangle from pegs on the bunker.

The boys have soft, young faces, but steely hard eyes that stab through a slit in the bunker and fix on the jungle in front of them.

I also peer at the jungle through the slit in the bunker, but my eyes are not sharp enough to dissect the blur of green and brown in front of me. One of the soldiers points out the sniper's position to me, but I just see a meaningless collage of color. Another trooper suggests I might get a better look by climbing out of the bunker and popping

my head over the sandbags.

I hesitate, but then decide that it's OK. Just a quick look. After all, no one is that fast on the trigger. But, obviously, another fighter thinks differently, as he slams my head down without warning as soon as I poke it out to venture a peek.

“Are you sure they have a sniper?” I ask him.

“Sure. Maybe we can get him to fire at us.”

At this point, the young trooper moves up behind the sandbags to try to draw fire by shouting at the Burmese in a tone of voice that is obviously insulting. I don't bother to ask for the translation, because I know that I couldn't print it. But I gather that it has something to do with the mothers of Burmese soldiers.

After a few shouts, nothing happens, so we pull away.

Then we hear the snap, crackle and pop of an automatic weapon spitting hot metal Rice Krispies at us. Guess he was right ... there's a sniper after all.

Four Decades Of Neglect

A little-publicized war, now more than 40 years old, continues on in these mountains. Karen anticommunist guerrillas, living off their wits, still fight against a corrupt, authoritarian regime. The guerrillas have pledged to replace the socialist dictatorship in Rangoon with a federation based on Western democratic principles. The cruel irony is that the Western democratic governments continue



IN THE MIST



Soldier from Karen all-female unit trains at Salween observation post near Thai-Burmese border. Primarily because of influence from powerful Thai companies that want Burmese teak, Thai government allows Burmese troops to stage assaults on such posts from Thai soil.

As in most guerrilla armies, uniforms, ages and levels of experience among soldiers differ dramatically. Contrasting sharply with Karen children and young female fighters is this weathered veteran preparing for combat at Morpokay.



When not firing "hot metal Rice Krispies" at Burmese army, Karens fire rockets from hybrid launchers as shown here.

to ignore the guerrillas, and at times, appear to be strengthening their ties with the dictatorship in Rangoon.

In late 1988, the Karen formed the Democratic Alliance of Burma (DAB) with other opposition groups throughout the country to coordinate military and

political action. Chosen as chairman of the DAB was Karen leader General Bo Mya. General Mya made numerous pleas to Western governments for assistance, but the West seemed to want to sit this one out.

I didn't get it, so I decided to infiltrate into Burma from Thailand with a small group of Karen guerrillas to take a look for myself.

The Karen are one of the larger ethnic minorities — 7 million people out of a

total Burmese population of 40 million. Not only do they field a large number of troops (20,000), they also control a significant chunk of territory — a strip of real estate extending virtually the entire length of the southern Thai-Burmese border, which they christened "Kawthoolei," meaning "land without evil."

The Karen have distinguished themselves from other "hill tribes" that have resisted the Rangoon government over the years because there is very little "hill tribe" about them.

First, they have a structured, democratic government that resembles the British system. Second, a large number of Karen are Christian, having come under the influence of Christian missionaries in the 19th century. Third, unlike other minorities in northern Burma, the Karen are adamantly opposed to drug trafficking. In fact, they have a history of prosecuting and executing drug smugglers caught in their territory.

The Karen derive their income from harvesting timber, mining antimony, and taxing (a nominal 5%) the unofficial cross-border trade between Burma and Thailand. This consists mostly of cattle, lumber and rubies in one direction (to Thailand) and provisions and manufactured goods in the other (to Burma).

I slipped into this "land without evil" from Thailand at a place called Maethawaw, a small village along the Moei River that defines the border between Thailand and Burma. Here, we planned to rendezvous with a long-tail boat that would take us upriver to the general headquarters of the KNLA at Mannerplaw.

Chicks And Hot Metal On The Moei

When we arrive, we find that Burmese and Karen troops are fighting halfway up a small mountain on the Burmese side of the river. About 25 meters from our rendezvous point, an 81mm mortar tube is lobbing high explosive rounds into a patch of thick jungle canopy that has been spitting out small arms fire.

We crouch in the periphery of the jungle along the Thai side until our long-tail boat skids into the riverbank. Instantly, Karen scurry down the riverbank with sacks of rice, vegetables, fruit, and several large cardboard crates of chirping baby chickens.

I wrap a blue shirt around my head as a makeshift turban to blend in better with the local color. And I hope that the boys up on the hill are too distracted by hot pieces of metal whizzing through the air to take note of our little boating party.

However, instead of madly dashing for the boat, I find myself frolicking down the beach, feeling somewhat pretentious, to avoid the melodrama that a mad dash would add to a situation dominated by chirping chicks. I clamber over the bow of

"I hope that the boys up on the hill

are too distracted by hot pieces of

metal whizzing through the air ..."

the boat and maneuver to a spot amidships on the plank floor.

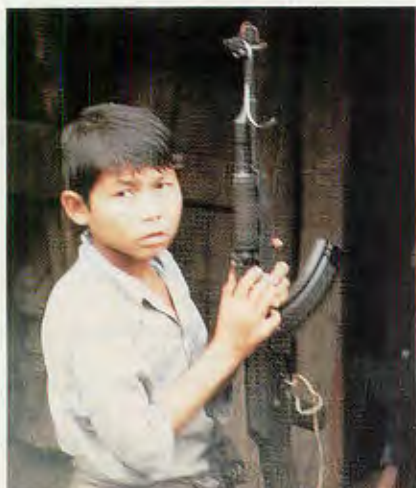
Immediately, the boatman revs the engine in reverse to break us from the beach, then bends the boat around by retracting the 12-foot shaft with screeching propeller from the water, pushing the eight-cylinder car engine into the right-angle position, then kerplunking the shaft back into the water for a turn that brings a new crescendo to the chirping chicks. So begins our three-hour cruise up the muddy brown Moei River.

On my right, a flock of doves roosts in a tree, ironically marking the gateway to the battle zone.

The Moei is as challenging as it is beautiful, and often tests us with rapids, whirlpools and rocks. It is also narrow and unprotected — we can easily be picked off by a rifle hidden in the dense jungle that lines the banks, and flattened or flooded by a well-placed mortar round, lobbed from one of the mountain peaks. I try to think about my next steps if that starts to happen.

As our long-tailed craft revs along, I wonder if I will ever return down this river, which is the only link between the hidden world of the guerrillas and the rest of the universe. I feel like I'm squeezing through a crack in the cosmos.

After about an hour's ride, we veer over to the Burmese side where an orange, blue and white Karen flag on a bamboo pole



One of many young Karen freedom fighters — this one, probably less than 10 years old. While American kids at this age typically worry more about being hit in the face with a snowball, Karen boys face the everyday reality of being shot.

sticks out from the sand. A dozen or so troops scurry out of the jungle to pick up several sacks of rice. They carry a mix of folding-stock AK-47s and M16s. Their dark khaki uniforms are drenched black with jungle sweat and their boots are pasted brown with jungle mud. Puffy bags under their eyes betray nights of long vigilance.

After arriving in Mannerplaw, I am put up in a small room with a bed made of wooden planks covered with a thin straw mat. I also get a pillow, a thin wool blanket

JEFFERSONIAN GUERRILLAS AND THE 10 O'CLOCK NEWS

In Mannerplaw, I shared a stilt house with David Tharckabaw, secretary to the prime minister of Kawthoolei, and his cook, who fixed us three meals a day — typically vegetables and rice with spicy bits of meat, and coffee rich enough to fuel a long-tail boat.

David is in his mid-50s and was a soldier in the Karen National Liberation Army (KNLA). Instead of trousers, he wears the traditional Burmese *longyi* — a red, plaid *sarong*-like cylinder of cloth wrapped around and tucked in. He has a degree in chemistry from the University of Rangoon and is articulate in several languages.

He usually is pouring over a diverse collection of books — on chemistry, physics, history, whatever — trying to figure out something, invent something, or resolve something. His intellectual manner and serious spectacles give him an almost professorial air. However, he is more of a pragmatic engineer than a theoretical academic. These days, David spends most of his time on the veranda of his thatched-roof house drafting a constitution for what he hopes will one day be the new Federation of Burma. This will be the government built by Karen and other guerrilla forces, who are trying to replace the socialist regime in Rangoon.

David's draft proposes a federation based on eight states and five autonomous provinces. The states would be aligned with the territory controlled by the country's major ethnic groups; provinces would be similarly carved out, based on lands inhabited by the hill tribes.

David has reviewed the constitutions of the U.S., Canada, Australia, Switzerland, Yugoslavia and West Germany. The idea is to form a democracy that allows ethnic groups autonomy in areas they currently control, as well as giving them fair consideration in a national government.

I spent most of my time at Mannerplaw discussing constitutional theory with David. I'm not an expert on the subject, but was the best feedback he had.

We spent hours debating fundamental issues such as voting, taxation, freedom of speech and property rights. Despite my high-class, American education, I felt woefully overmatched by this man in the jungle, who peered through thick spectacles and scribbled ancient curly-cue-like script on paper so coarse, you could still get a splinter from it.

One afternoon, we rehashed all the issues in a meeting with the vice president of Kawthoolei, Saw Than Aung.

The vice president's house was similar to the other stilt houses, built on a higher piece of ground, perhaps, but with nothing that spoke of special title or privilege. David and I took off our shoes, as is the custom, and entered. In stocking feet, I faced the vice president across a simple table hacked out of jungle timber.

Vice President Saw Than Aung was a kindly old man, but with the priest-like aura of an elder statesman. He listened carefully and spoke cautiously, weighing the content of each word before expressing it.

I hadn't bathed or shaved for several days, and was wearing the same clothes I had boated up in. Yet, the vice president made me feel like an important dignitary; he fixed his full attention on me and seemed to seriously consider every word I uttered.

By this time, I was leaning toward the pragmatic. Trying to write the perfect constitution had been frustrating. Man has been trying to write the perfect constitution, that guarantees everyone everything, for hundreds of years. And taking the best of the Western democratic constitutions and sewing them all together also was not the answer.

Just several days of the process had drained me, and there were more important issues at hand: the Karen and other ethnic groups needed to demonstrate that they could function under a unified political structure.

And they needed to sustain the momentum of their urban demonstrations with military action. Maybe it was my Western sense of urgency, but I sensed that their Democratic Alliance of Burma (DAB) was running out of time.

"You now have a window, a historical window of opportunity, that you must seize and act on or it will close on you," I preached. "The key to winning is not fighting these battles up in the mountains — you need to make the 10 o'clock news, at least once a week.

"You need to be sending small teams of men into the cities and making a mess of everything. Blow up power stations, military equipment. Cities are where the news is made. And you need to do it now," I added.

"We have fought the Burmese for the last 40 years, and we can fight them for the next 40 years," the vice president proudly replied.

"But do you want to?" I politely asked.

"Obviously, we each had a very different sense of timing and priority.

"You know," the vice president said, "most people who come here just want to know about the military situation — how many Burmese we killed. But they are not sensitive to the political situation, and they don't help us think about solutions to the political problems, and there are many. But no one wants to talk about these. Mr. Peter, you will always be welcome among the Karen people."

With that, our meeting ended. Saw Than Aung's parting words made this whole trip worthwhile.

— P.B.



and a blue mosquito net. First-class accommodations for the jungle.

A Karen official explains that the mosquito netting is crucial and ceremoniously helps me string it up. Malaria is rampant in these parts, and not an uncommon cause of death. Also, several strains are resistant to the doctor-prescribed, high-tech antimalarial tablets I am taking.

This causes me some concern, but I am told that I should count my blessings. The mosquitoes on the Thai side of the river are

Female Karen freedom fighters may live traditional female roles in villages, but on front lines, in this case, at Morpokay, they live as soldiers.

worse. They also carry dengue fever and elephantitis. I ask how the elephantitis mosquitoes know they're supposed to stay on the Thai side of the river, since it's only about 25 meters wide, but am not consoled by the answer: "They stay."

I decide to enhance the effectiveness of my tablets with a jungle practice taught to

me by an old African trooper I once met in Hong Kong: don't bathe. Simple in theory, gruesome in application, the idea is to build up an impenetrable crust of body oil, sweat and dirt as armor against infection-carrying insects.

Leap-Frogging the Fronts

I eventually get permission to see Bo Mya, leader of the Karen, and chairman of the DAB. Bo Mya is not an easy fellow to get to. He is only a day's trip overland from Mannerplaw HQ, but to get there, David Tharckabaw, secretary to the prime minister of Kawthoolei, and myself, have to leap-frog around Burmese army positions.

First, we take a long-tail down the river to Maethawaw. This is where I started out several days earlier and serious fighting is still going on. The boatman approaches very cautiously as the familiar cackle of assault rifles and thump of mortar shells grows louder. This time, at least, no squawking chicks.

David explains that we are going to get off on the Thai side of the river, then go overland as far as possible before crossing back into Burma. This way, we can easily avoid the Burmese army and make good time.

Tourists On The Moei

However, I'm concerned about crossing back into Thailand. I'm worried about getting picked up by a Thai border patrol. It's happened before on previous trips. That means shipment back to Bangkok. Maybe this time, out of the country. And I've come too far for that. I tell David I'd rather take my chances with the Burmese army. But he figures he has a good story to cover me if we run into the Thai military.

"Just tell them you are a tourist."

"Right. And just what am I doing here?"

"Tell them you just wanted to take a boat ride down the river."

I am very disappointed with my cover, but I can't come up with a better one. David's idea is so absurd, it may just work. After all, even being here is absurd.

After spilling out onto the riverbank, we hike to a nearby village, where we negotiate a pickup truck to drive us further south.

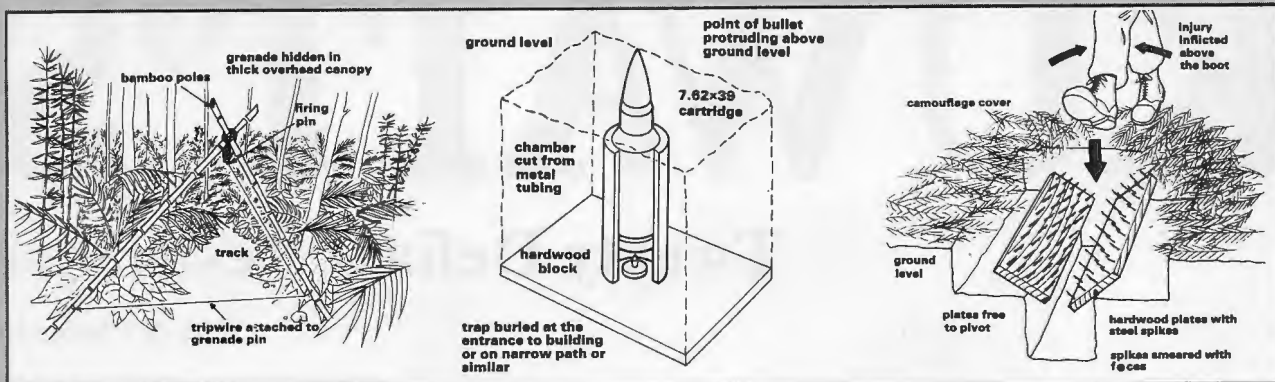
We zoom along for a good half hour, when David signals the driver to stop near a young man prodding a sea of Burmese cattle with a stick along the road. You know they are Burmese cattle because they have that central casting sacred cow look — scrawny animals with rib cages bulging through their sides and humps on their backs, right out of a Gandhi movie. They are being smuggled into Thailand for sale at a nearby market.

We slowly wade through this sea of humpbacks, careful not to step in steamy hot cow pie, fresh from the oven, and careful to avoid the horns as the animals sniff our crotches and belch at us. We

I feel that these people

have been written off

by the West.



Waging war means not only avoiding one's enemy, but also avoiding the little surprises — booby traps — he wants you to discover. Designed to reduce morale by creating fear and uncertainty, these three booby traps (L to R), the overhead grenade trap, the cartridge trap, and the punji bear trap, have all been used by both the Burmese army and the Karen in the jungles of eastern Burma.

ultimately make our way to the riverbank, where a small dugout canoe hides in the tall grass along the beach. This innocent-looking canoe could be a serious obstacle: it is basically a tree trunk that has been carved out with a hand axe. It is small and shallow. Once we get in, it sinks to a 1-inch waterline. One sneeze and we're overboard.

We're also totally exposed on open water in broad daylight in a craft that can, with luck, zip along at a speed of 1 mile per hour.

We glide across to the other side, and hike a ways to a large village. Roads crisscross rows of houses on stilts. Trucks are zooming about beeping their horns. Guys with guns are everywhere. This is no jungle campsite — this is Stilt City.

Just outside the village, David supplies his name and password to a sentry with a walkie-talkie. However, it takes several tries to get us cleared because the tonal, sing-song nature of the Karen language makes it difficult to be understood over high-tech squelch.

General Bo Mya is a stout, affable leader, with a boyish face and an easygoing manner. After polite greetings, we sit down cross-legged on a straw mat.

Bo Mya served with the British in World War II as part of "Force 136," a special guerrilla unit formed to collect intelligence and harass the Japanese. After the war, he enlisted with the Burmese police force, but joined the Karen uprising after Burma's independence in 1948.

General Mya's appeal to the West clearly comes through. He needs Western support to make the DAB coalition work. The DAB cannot economically afford to sustain a broadscale conflict on its own, so, it needs the blessing of at least one external economic power. General Mya

claims the DAB has been looking for aid from anywhere, except communist countries. Unfortunately, nobody appears to be listening.

I sense a deep frustration. General Mya cannot understand why the West does not share his goal of a free, democratic Burma. He doesn't understand why the contrast in Nicaragua could get aid, but not the Karen.

"Right now, we need guns. We have the trained men to fight the Burmese army, but we don't have enough guns and ammunition."

Shortly afterwards, David and I are back in the canoe. General Mya's frustration is

minutes later, we're at a safehouse in a village along the border, where we meet a Karen scout who will take us to our destination.

We go by truck to the perimeter of the jungle, then trek along a jungle trail to a clump of weeds near the bank of the Moei River. Our guide makes a token reconnaissance up and down the river, then whistles at a small clump of weeds on the opposite side. A Karen in uniform emerges and launches a small dugout canoe, which he paddles to our side. We tiptoe in to avoid overturning the craft, then silently paddle back across the river.

We quickly find the battalion commander, who will guide us around the front lines. I assess my gear and decide to leave as much as possible. Random shelling and small arms fire is ping-ponging back and forth, and I need to be as agile and mobile as possible.

The battalion commander grabs a sniper rifle. Unless we're going deer hunting, I'm not sure I agree with his choice of weapon, but defer to his experience. He offers me an M16, but I decline. I've got enough junk dangling around my neck right now,

and recognize that my first priority is to shoot film, not the opposition. That's the job description. I figure that if things get really exciting, I can always change my priorities. Then, screw the job description.

Everyone checks his gear, and we move out. After a short hike into the jungle, we come upon a very elaborate trench and bunker network. Given that we're socked in by jungle, it's hard to orient myself. I'd need a road map to find my way around. Off in the distance, we hear the distinctive spurt of AK-47 bursts and the thump of mortar rounds. We start trotting in that

Continued on page 88

SPINELESS SLIMEBALLS

On 21 June 1991, SOF received a letter from Karen National Union (KNU) Prime Minister Ba Thin. Following are excerpts from that letter.

The Burmese army is launching an offensive against us in Papun District with the intention of cutting off our lines of communication with Taungoo District. For three weeks now, they have used four planes to bomb and strafe our positions four times daily. So far, we have suffered seven casualties and 43 wounded in the Burmese offensive. Fighting is continuing.

Burmese soldiers are shooting Karen villagers on sight when they enter villages in Thaton District. Many people have been tortured and killed.

Karen women and children from the village of Hlaing Bwe were loaded in a Burmese army truck and placed at the front of a Burmese army convoy. Women and children also are being forced to carry water for Burmese troops stationed at the top of Burmese-occupied hills.

Thank you for your magazine's concern about the Karen people. I hope you can expose as many of these inhumane acts committed by the Burmese government as possible.

now my frustration. I feel that these people have been written off by the West.

Destination: Front Lines

David and I make our way back to the highway, and he explains that we need to travel back up the river. Our destination is Morkokay, where Karen are faced off with Burmese troops. I ask how we're going to get there, and am totally caught off guard by the answer: "Hitchhike!"

Sure enough, still clad in his distinctive red, plaid longyi skirt and sandals, David walks up to the road and sticks his thumb out. And no shit, a small pickup truck actually stops to give us a lift. About 20

KUWAIT'S

Twenty Defiant Resistance

Text & Photos by



It was the blackest dawn so far. The Iraqis had torched the oil fields to hinder Coalition bombing efforts. As a result, the sky above, and south toward the burning Al Hamadi oil fields, eclipsed Kuwait like a black burial shroud. Coalition jets whined overhead on their ceaseless bombing missions, invisible above the pall of smoke.

In the quiet residential area of Algrane, however, there was activity, despite the unnatural darkness. Early that morning there had been rejoicing within these houses at the news that the Coalition ground offensive to liberate Kuwait had at last begun.

At 0730, a car pulled into the Massala Crescent. It contained four armed members of the Iraqi secret police and was followed by a minibus full of Iraqi soldiers. The crescent had been targeted by the Iraqis in their search for members of the Kuwaiti Resistance. Obeying a signal from the car, one of the Iraqi soldiers hammered on the door of compound number 23. When there was no response, he climbed onto the wall.

Captain Hamid kept well back in the shadows of an upstairs room as he peered down the iron sights of his Kalashnikov at the Iraqi soldier clambering over the wall. Gently he squeezed the trigger. In the

ABOVE: Number 24, the Iraqi tank-pounded compound where three Kuwaiti Resistance defenders were killed, but Capt. Hamid and three colleagues managed to walk away.



Hatchway above door of bath in 24, where Capt. Hamid and three men successfully hid from Iraqis.

enclosed room his Kalashnikov roared thunderously as the soldier toppled backwards into the street. Captain Hamid



Ground-floor hallway of 24, with Iraqi secret police vehicle visible beyond demolished compound wall.

cursed himself for having left the selector on automatic and ducked back as rounds thudded into the window frame behind which he was hiding.

The captain was commander of a Resistance cell of 20 men in the Algrane area. He had chosen the site because it was a backwater seldom disturbed by Iraqi troops. Three houses, numbers 23, 24 and 25, which together formed an island in the center of the Massala Crescent, were his base.

Alerted to the Iraqi presence, the captain deployed his men — eight, including himself in 23; seven next door in 24, with his second-in-command, Khalid. He selected Achmad, a calm, dependable man to take five men to 25 (which stood back-to-back with 24). Achmad's orders were to scout out a possible escape route, or, if

ALAMO

Fighters vs. Iraqi Army

Peter Douglas



Interior of 24, completely blitzed by Iraqis.

escape were impossible, to guard the rear.

Ordering his companions to cover him from the windows, Achmad darted out through the front gate of 25. As yet, there seemed to be no sign of Iraqi activity on this side. Ducking across the parking lot, he headed up an alley to the right of the main road into the crescent.

Outnumbered And Surrounded

When he emerged at the other end, he was appalled to see at least a company of Iraqi soldiers debussing from trucks and heading straight toward him. As he ran back to warn the others of the trap about to close, more Iraqi soldiers appeared at the mouth of the main road. Achmad dove behind a parked car as a squad of soldiers swarmed around the corner of 25 in front of him.

The bunched squad of Iraqis dissolved before him as he opened up with his AK at 15 meters: The point soldier flipped backwards, blood pumping from a head wound. Two others crumpled in their tracks and sprawled in the road. A third dropped his weapon and rolled back around the corner clutching his leg.

With the loud crack of rounds clipping

past his head, Achmad dropped behind the car, changed magazines, and bolted for the gate of 25 before more visitors arrived. He made it through the gate, heart pounding as impacting rounds splashed stucco off the compound wall. Soldiers were beginning to spill into the crescent from the alley.

Braced against the wall, Achmad put several short bursts into the mouth of the alley. This had the effect of persuading the Iraqis to seek cover in the surrounding houses. But for the Resistance, there was no way out. It was clear that the trap was sealed.

In the meantime, Capt. Hamid's most immediate problem was sustained, heavy fire from the two soldiers who were in the first minibus, who had taken shelter just yards away, behind the compound wall. Calling Fhazad, his weapons expert, to the window, the captain asked him if he could lob a grenade just over the wall.

Fhazad grinned his agreement, but as he turned to throw the grenade, two rounds hit him in the stomach and he keeled over, dropping the grenade harmlessly into the compound below. He was bleeding profusely and in obvious distress. Without



Point-blank position across street from compound where Iraqi T-62 tank pounded Kuwaiti stronghold.

medical supplies all Capt. Hamid could do was order two men to drag him into a rear bathroom and bind him tightly with sheets.

Grenadier's Revenge

During this diversion, Jamil, a lad whom the group used mainly for running messages, crept toward the window across the glass-covered floor and hurled a second grenade. Captain Hamid heard it detonate with satisfying violence outside the compound next to the parked car and turned to see Jamil flushed with pride. They had no more problems from that quarter.

The firing started again with a vengeance, immediately wounding another man in the head. An Iraqi light machine gun was firing off whole belts at a time with commendable enthusiasm, but

with little effect. Under the hail of covering fire, an Iraqi platoon dashed forward opposite 23. Every defender in line of sight fired rapid bursts. The Iraqi platoon took casualties and hastily retreated. Captain Hamid ordered his men not to fire at the wounded who were crawling away, less out of compassion than the overriding need to conserve ammunition.

He then dispatched Adel, a rotund former police sergeant, to give orders to the men on the rooftops to use grenades against any Iraqis who gained the shelter of the compound wall. Adel relieved the man on the roof of house 24, taking cover behind the low facade.

Iraqi RPG (rocket-propelled grenade launcher) rounds were now incoming and he felt the impact as one slammed into the wall a floor beneath him. It punched a fist-sized hole through the bricks on the stairwell as a man named Hajji walked past, distributing ammunition. The blast both threw Hajji down the stairs and decapitated him.

Heavy fire broke out once more as another Iraqi platoon tried to rush house 25 across the open parking lot. Achmad's group dealt effectively with this assault, accounting for more Iraqis, but at a cost of two of their own seriously wounded. The Iraqis kept up the pressure. They launched further assaults, but reduced the numbers in each to squad level. However, as they attacked from only one direction at a time, Capt. Hamid was able to concentrate his response fire onto each new threat.

As the hours slipped past, the group monitored the radio. It seemed possible that the Coalition advance might reach Kuwait City within the next few hours. Although ammunition was critical, there was a chance that if they could hold on until Coalition

forces arrived, they might be able to break out and escape in the confusion. It was a desperate glimmer of hope, but the captain encouraged his men with it.

Toe To Toe With Iraqi Tanks

Then, as they rested during a lull, a new sound was heard, hard to place at first ... the steady growl of distant engines: tanks! Unlike the Iraqis, Capt. Hamid had always thought that the main Coalition thrust would come through the desert from the south, not from the sea. For a moment, he almost believed that his deliverance was at hand. He bounded onto the roof. There were indeed tanks. Beyond the alleyway he could see Iraqi T-62s maneuvering outside the crescent.

The situation was deteriorating rapidly. The captain sent orders to Khalid to take their only RPG, with its three rockets, and make his way to the roof of 24, which afforded the best arcs of fire. There he was to use one rocket at each of the first three tanks he saw. By this stratagem he hoped to deter their crews from venturing close in, shielding infantry behind them.

In 24, Abid, a large bear-like man, had offered to act as Khalid's number two. Tucking the rockets with their fluorescent pink tips under his thick biceps, he followed Khalid as he crawled onto the exposed roof. Behind the low facade they loaded the first rocket. Adel, already in position on the roof, kept watch. The T-62s broadcast their intention to move with billowing clouds of white exhaust and the throaty roar of their engines. With a loud rattling of tracks, the first tank lurched forward.

As soon as Adel saw the long green barrel nudge past the end of the alley he shouted a warning. Khalid and Abid leapt to their feet, Abid letting rip a long burst of automatic fire as he did

COLLECTING GARBAGE AND INTELLIGENCE

The speed and scope of the Iraqi invasion caught the Kuwaiti military off guard. Although there was significant military response, particularly around the Royal Palace where a Kuwaiti prince was killed, the military forces of Kuwait were quickly overrun.

Many Kuwaiti air force pilots escaped with their planes to Saudi Arabia to fight another day, and many surviving members of the police and military took their weapons and went underground. The ranks of those involved in uncoordinated Resistance activity were swelled by enthusiastic but untrained members of the Kuwaiti population.

Although burning with desire to fight back, these Resistance fighters were hampered by a lack of weapons and virtually no central command to coordinate their efforts. Anyone captured was tortured for information. Resistance fighters suffered dramatic losses from the swift, violent reactions of the Iraqi invaders.

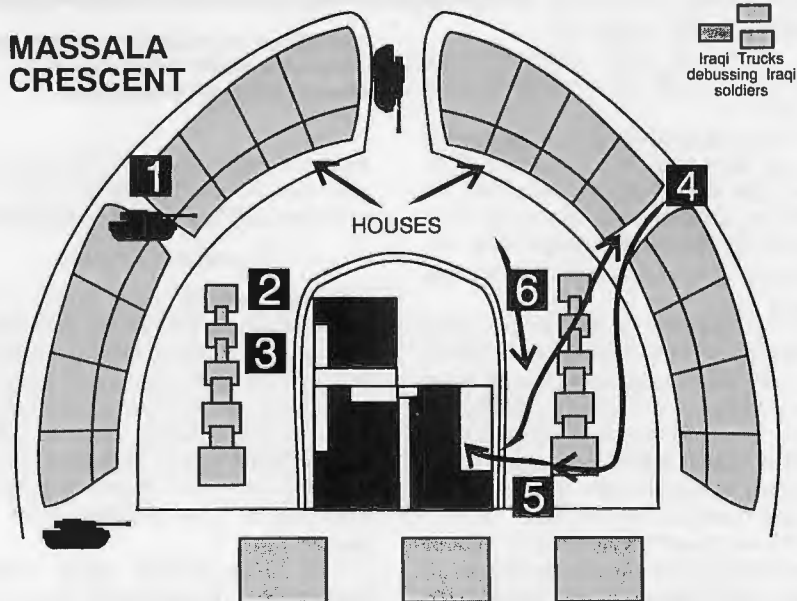
The Resistance movement in Kuwait was predestined to be brief, but at its lowest ebb, a leadership emerged that realistically deemed that instead of military action, intelligence gathering should become the new front line.

Because arrest and death were possible even for minor infractions of Iraqi decrees, or the whim of a street-corner sentry, it was essential for Resistance members to present a bland face of normality and blend with the population. Once effectively invisible to the Iraqis, the Resistance could go about its intelligence mission unmolested.

This phase of passive resistance also involved ensuring the basic infrastructure of Kuwait continued to function. Collecting garbage may have lacked the satisfaction of direct military action, but it enabled Resistance members to infiltrate and gather intelligence on sensitive Iraqi positions.

This intelligence was relayed to Coalition forces and played its part in the secret war against Iraq prior to the Coalition counterattack. Gathering such intelligence required patience and raw courage. Many of the men and women who formed the Kuwaiti Resistance did not survive to witness the liberation they had worked for.

— P.D.



- 1 Damaged tank
- 2 Iraqi mini bus
- 3 Secret police car
- 4 Achmad's position when he spotted Iraqi soldiers debussing
- 5 Position from which Achmad fires behind car
- 6 Iraqi soldiers swarming around compound wall of 25

so. His rounds bounced harmlessly off the tank edging into view, but the aggressive action encouraged them both. Taking quick aim, Khalid fired the RPG. The backblast blew laundry on a line behind him into the air. The rocket struck a track and the tank swerved to the left and

The "Alamo" at Algrane, site of Capt. Hamid's last stand against armor-assisted Iraqi secret police.



Ever-resourceful Achmad, survivor of Iraqi siege at Algrane.

wedged, side-on, into the alley.

Khalid and Abid whooped for joy and ducked to reload as small arms fire crackled over their heads. Another tank began to advance hesitantly down the main road leading into the crescent. Khalid fired the second rocket. It hit the heavy frontal armor without effect and the tank vented its rage by firing. The shell hit the water tank next to Khalid and Abid, which erupted in a sheet of flame and water. They were both killed on the spot. Adel, badly burned, crawled downstairs.

Keeping Tanks At Bay

Despite this loss, the RPG fire had succeeded in persuading the tanks to come no closer. Instead, they fired repeatedly into the three houses, mostly at 24. Inside, the men crawled to rooms in the rear. Plaster fell from the ceiling and great chunks of masonry were blasted from the outside walls. The concussion felt like repeated blows from a baseball bat. No one expected to live much longer.

When the deafening explosions stopped, everyone was so begrimed with dirt and the rooms so dark with choking dust and smoke it was difficult to recognize anyone. Hamid, his ears ringing like a belfry, had to shout the command to move forward again. As 25 was coming under less pressure, he sent orders for Achmad to move to 24 to replace Khalid.

Five minutes passed before the Iraqis launched a platoon-sized attack against 23 and 24. The Resistance was ready when they came, and greeted them with sustained fire. Again the assault was beaten back. The weary men in the houses conserved their ammunition and waited for the next wave. Instead, a tank shell exploded without warning, seriously wounding another two men in 24. Dragging their wounded back, the men again retreated to the relative safety of the rear rooms to endure more tank fire. The sands were rapidly running out for the Resistance. When the pounding stopped,



Kasim, one of Capt. Hamid's men, and survivor of Iraqi attack on 24.

the Iraqis launched three simultaneous assaults.

This was what Capt. Hamid had feared most — having to spread thin his limited firepower. The assaults against 23 and 24 were driven off, but the momentum of the Iraqi rush carried a platoon as far as the compound wall of 25. From this cover, the Iraqis showered the compound with grenades and scrambled a squad over the wall. One grenade entered a window, wounding another two defenders, and the Iraqi squad in the compound rushed the front door.

The Resistance was hard pushed to hold them off, and two soldiers made it into the hall. Fortunately, a well-timed burst of fire killed both, and the discouraged remnants of their squad escaped out of the front gate. Meanwhile in 24, Achmad had crawled onto the shattered roof. From here he was able to lob grenades with easy accuracy on

Author stands before burning Al Hamadi oil field, Kuwait.



Capt. Hamid, Intrepid leader of Kuwaiti Resistance defenders/survivors.

the Iraqi soldiers hiding behind the compound wall outside 25. The grenades detonated with savage effect. Survivors were persuaded to risk the small arms fire and fled back to their own lines.

Ammunition recovered from Iraqis killed within the perimeter of 25 was scarcely sufficient for the desperate needs of the Resistance. As 25 was the least-damaged house, Hamid organized the centralization of the wounded there. Subconsciously, he was preparing a last stand.

The Iraqis repeated the pattern of softening with tank fire followed by rush assaults, but thankfully they had reverted back to uncoordinated squad-sized attacks. Nevertheless, this took a grinding toll on the Resistance. By 1900 hours, the defenders were exhausted from the day-long battle. Three men had been killed outright, seven gravely wounded, and the remaining 10 were all injured in varying degrees. Captain Hamid knew it was almost over. Their remaining rounds could be held in one hand.

Sensing that the end was near, the Iraqis now launched another multidirectional attack. Once again, it was repulsed, but it had cost most of the Resistance its last rounds. Although the weary men realized that the next assault would be the last, everyone remained calm as Capt. Hamid distributed the last four grenades among the survivors — one each to the two men defending the wounded in 25, one to Achmad and his three remaining men in 24, and the last for himself and three others left in 23.

Fat Lady About To Sing

Tank fire heralded the opening of the last act. With no small arms ammunition left, Hamid and his three companions retreated to the bathroom at the back of house 23 and lay on the floor as the house shuddered with explosions. One of those

Continued on page 93

Back in his heyday, Jeffrey "Mad Dog" Beck kept an inscribed silver cigarette case prominently positioned on the coffee table of his Manhattan apartment. The inscription read: "Jeffrey P. Beck. In Appreciation for Blood, Fear and Courage in the Vietnam War. There but for him, go I." The scoop from Beck, an outrageously flamboyant and successful investment banker, was that the case was a gift from "some guy" he saved in Vietnam.

Beck had many other war mementos, both physical and psychological. He liked to startle his colleagues before big meetings by shouting his favorite battle cry: "Lock and load!"

He used to credit a chunky Seiko watch with saving his hand from the full force of an AK-47 round — a blow which, he said, nevertheless shattered his wrist and left an ugly scar. He regaled many a listener with harrowing tales of how he earned his Silver Star, two Bronze Stars and four Purple Hearts while serving as a Special Forces platoon leader. Even his nickname — "Mad Dog" — was bestowed on him in Vietnam, according to him.

The chink in Beck's apparently considerable armor was that there really wasn't any armor. From 1967 through 1969, when he was allegedly slogging his way through the jungles of Southeast Asia, Jeff Beck was in fact attending school in the States, where he was wracking his brain to find the best method for avoiding the draft.

He hit on the strategy of hiding in plain sight: He joined the Army Reserve, and put in his required few weeks of training. Period. Based on that minuscule experience, he was nevertheless able to concoct a ruse so believable that filmmaker Oliver Stone at one point was interested in making a movie about him. Actor Michael Douglas virtually took him under his wing, teaming him with a New York script writer — supposedly so that Douglas would eventually portray Beck.

Like the mythical Icarus whose wax wings melted when he flew too close to the sun, Beck's high flight was his own undoing. The wilder and more ostentatious his stories became, the more suspicious became his listeners. He was eventually unmasked by a former girlfriend who called a family member out of concern for Beck's apparently Vietnam-induced problems. The truth leaked out by word of mouth until he was exposed last year in a front page story in the *Wall Street Journal*.

Wild and woolly as it may seem, Beck's is not an isolated case.

Vietnam Gets Chic

"We have seen it before, and we are continuing to see, people who are misrepresenting themselves as Vietnam veterans," Wayne Smith, membership director of the Vietnam Veterans of



ONLY THE PHONY

Fake Vets Cash In On Vietnam Chic

by Susan Katz Keating

America (VVA), a national group with headquarters in Washington D.C., says. "It's not just confined to one group or type of people. It's happening at all different levels of society."

According to John Oberg, a social worker at the Vietnam Veterans of California, based in Sacramento, "The wanna-be vets are everywhere. They turn up all over the place." At the height of the antiwar movement, no one ever heard of a "wanna-be" — the only fakers around were those who had "politically correct" agendas for lying.

For example, in 1971 Al Hubbard was executive director of Vietnam Veterans Against the War. He said he was a former Air Force captain with two years in

Vietnam. He claimed to have been flying a transport plane into Da Nang when he caught some shrapnel. The injury supposedly earned him the Purple Heart. In truth, Hubbard was a staff sergeant stationed in Tacoma, Washington, during the war. He did not see combat, and did not receive the Purple Heart. Hubbard's artifice was clearly designed to authenticate his antiwar stance.

Now, the reasons for posing as a Vietnam vet run the gamut from greed to guilt. But one thing the current crop of fakers all have in common is that they are riding the relatively new tide of "Vietnam chic."

"People have always embellished their war records, but what is so remarkable now is the turnaround," Wayne Smith

Fake vets are often life's losers seeking sympathy or low-lives trying to make money or boost their own popularity on the backs of veterans such as Specialists Dwight Brown and David Perales (pictured) who fought the real thing, and often had little to show for it. Photo: DoD

says. "We were ostracized for so long. The authentic Vietnam vets would avoid the issue. They would hide their uniforms, hide their medals. Yet now, thanks to the vets who said, 'hell no, we won't back down anymore,' our service is viewed with respect, as being in vogue, and even sexy or jazzy."

DD-214 Underground

Some impostors go to great lengths to seemingly document their claims.

"There's a large underground network of fake DD-214s (service and discharge record) and even award citations," D. Mark Katz, spokesman for the American Legion, says. The phony documents are used by all age groups, he adds, not just by those who could have served in Vietnam. "As long as there are offered benefits for veterans, there will be a problem with fraudulent documents. If a government job gives a five-point preference for military service, then there will be people out there attempting to get that advantage through fraudulent means."

Other charlatans get by on the strength of their own statements — and it appears that no story is too absurd to be believed. In recent years, some outlandish fabrications have come to light:

* In Hawaii, a church-sponsored beach party was thrown into disarray when Leslie A. Tatay crawled out of the surf, pretending to be an escaped POW from Vietnam. His story had a very short life span, but managed to see print in the local press before he was exposed.

* In Kansas, Robert Lyons passed himself off as a four-star general, even though he was only 35 years old. He also claimed to be a Vietnam War hero and CIA agent. He used these guises to get money from women; he was eventually charged with impersonating a federal officer.

Other recent cases have been less transparent;

* In Utah, Robert Fife convinced everyone who knew him, including his therapist, that he suffered numerous problems resulting from his experience as a Naval officer in Vietnam. Fife claimed to be a pilot who was shot down in combat, then captured and tortured by the Viet Cong. After Fife committed suicide, his

wife of 23 years learned he had once enlisted in the Navy, but was discharged on medical grounds after only eight months.

* In Arizona, Darrow "Duke" Tully resigned as publisher of the *Arizona Republic* and *Phoenix Gazette* newspapers when his much-touted war record turned out to be false. Tully had presented himself as being a combat pilot in both Korea and Vietnam, when in fact he had never served the military in any capacity.

* In Georgia, John Maughn obtained loans, jobs and housing through sympathetic vet center workers touched by his experience as a POW. He ran up more than \$30,000 worth of debts, and finally aroused the suspicions of local veterans groups. They learned that Maughn had not served in Vietnam, and that his only time in prison came as a result of auto theft and firearms convictions.

There are no hard figures on the percentage of fraudulent veterans, but



Tom Harkin, a Democratic senator from Iowa, talks with Senator Edward Kennedy. Perhaps Harkin is telling him of his exploits as a fighter pilot in "The 'Nam," and over Cuba, or his time spent on the ground witnessing atrocities when he was in SpecOps. Or he could be telling him something true. Photo: Bettmann/UPI

according to one legitimate vet who attended a post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) clinic in Menlo Park, California, eight of 100 patients in his program turned out to be bogus.

"Two had forged their DD-214s," he says, "and the others were discovered in therapy."

Vet center phonies — such as the mail carrier who claimed to have been shot seven times in the leg — are most often just whisked from the room when unmasked. But the larger-scale, public fakes arouse a great deal of anger. Some have been ruined by their own lies.

Faux Green Berets

Politician Royall H. Switzler, a Republican state representative, was trying to get elected as governor of Massachusetts in 1986, when he decided his chances would be improved by

claiming a Vietnam War record. Switzler sounded very dashing indeed as he portrayed himself a former Green Beret with plenty of jungle exploits under his belt. Unfortunately, the truth about Switzler was far less appealing: he was indeed a veteran, but he was also a liar. His military service consisted only of a peacetime hitch in Korea.

What began as a promising political venture ended in shame. Switzler was publicly exposed and withdrew his candidacy. He explained his deception in deferential terms. "I owe an apology to those who served in Vietnam," he said. "It was out of the high esteem that I hold for you that I took your honor as my own and in doing so did you a grave injustice."

Switzler at least recognized when the game was up; he has not since re-emerged with further tales of alleged adventure. Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa has not been so careful.

Harkin first lost face in 1984, during a closely contested bid for the Senate seat he now holds. Harkin was, at the time, a 10-year incumbent in Congress. He claimed to be a former Navy combat pilot who flew F-4 and F-8 jets on missions over Vietnam. During the 1984 Senate contest, another senator, Barry Goldwater (then a major general in the Air Force Reserve), knew the truth and decided enough was enough. He publicly denounced Harkin as a fake.

Harkin's people at first responded with a hilarious explanation that their man had actually been in combat in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, from 1965 to 1966, when he flew the F-4 and F-8 missions. But Harkin finally came out and

said that he had never been a Vietnam combat pilot, contradicting his own numerous published claims. The issue seemed settled once and for all when he set the record straight; he was in fact a ferry pilot, transporting crippled aircraft out of Saigon to repair facilities in Japan.

Coming clean did Harkin a world of political good — he won the race. Within months of being sworn in, however, he again made false claims, this time intimating he had walked the jungles of Southeast Asia.

After viewing controversial photos which purported to show Nicaraguan contras slitting the throat of a Sandinista spy, Harkin vouched for their authenticity. "The pictures show graphically the same kind of thing I saw in Vietnam," he said.

The claims slipped by relatively unnoticed. Now, with a run for the presidency looming on his horizon, Harkin is once again being touted as a Vietnam

combat pilot. It remains to be seen whether his service will become an issue in the coming campaign.

Just as Harkin benefited from his first unmasking (and subsequent confession), so too did two Texas-based impostors who hoped to parlay their phony backgrounds into a successful business venture.

Phony Vets Start Museum

Gaylord Stevens and Kenneth Bonner both claimed to be Vietnam veterans when they opened their Vietnam War Museum in San Antonio. Ironically, the two men even fooled each other: neither knew that the other was a sham. They maintained their deceptions for only a few months past the museum's Fourth of July grand opening. Their true military backgrounds were revealed, prompting a great public uproar.

Most of the attention focused on Stevens, who was discovered to have been charged in 1981 with possession of counterfeit money and conspiracy to print counterfeit currency. He pleaded guilty to the first charge, cooperated with government agents, and served no jail time.

Both Stevens and Bonner admitted wrongdoing and submitted their resignations to the museum. It was clearly the right move. The museum's board of directors embraced them as if they were prodigal sons, insisting they stay on. Bonner later left, for reasons unrelated to the scandal, with Stevens remaining at the helm. Surprisingly, he emerged as something of a folk hero.

"I expected to be run out of town on a rail," he said at the time. "I thought I would have to leave. I never expected to still be a part of it. It's quite interesting and strange that I am."

Stevens said he lied about his record in order to get much-needed donations. He said that real veterans told him they would not have helped with the project had they known he was not genuine. For a while at least, it seemed that the museum would be a success. Publicity from the scandal brought in visitors who otherwise might not have come. Those who did come were enriched, Steven said.

Discovered Once — Try Again

"The Veterans Administration said the museum helped people who suffered from stress syndrome," Stevens said. "Psychiatrists said it helped guys to work here. I had one guy leave a piece of scrap metal that had been in his pocket for 20 years. I had one lady in tears. She confessed she had been out throwing rocks and bottles during the war because she was upset about her own husband being killed over there."



Wisconsin Senator "Tail-Gunner" Joe McCarthy had difficulty recalling exactly what he did in World War II. According to him, he was a tail-gunner on a B-24 flying bombing missions against Japanese targets. That was news to the Army, which had him down as an intelligence officer who debriefed pilots after bombing missions. Photo: Bettmann/UPI

Stevens' good fortune did not last long. He ran into financial difficulty and attempted to transfer some of the museum's assets to a newly formed group, the Viet Nam War Institute. Last July, officers of the institute announced they had broken off negotiations "for legal, liability and public image reasons too numerous to mention." They planned to open their own facility at a separate location.

Stevens resurfaced in Houston, this time calling himself a "Vietnam-era" vet (he served in the Coast Guard from 1969 until 1972, remaining in the United States the entire time). He announced he was raising money to open a new facility near the downtown convention center.

"He came to us asking for support," an officer with a member group of the Houston-area Veterans Council, a coordinating body for the town's chartered veterans organizations, says. "We asked him to explain how and where he got his money. He said they had donations from two well-known area corporations. When we checked up on it, the companies said they hadn't even heard of Stevens, let alone been approached by him."

Stevens, meanwhile, had hired a number of sack-toting solicitors to collect money by the side of the road. The takings were supposedly deposited each day at a bank named by Stevens.

"The bank where he claimed to have an account said there was none in the name of Gaylord Stevens, the Vietnam War

Museum, or that of his development director," according to the source. "We then set up three meetings at which we were promised the group's financial records, and the documentation on the authenticity of their 4,000 display artifacts." They never produced the records or the documentation.

Fakes Damage Real Vets

The episode produced precisely the type of negative publicity veterans like to avoid. "There's a lot of animosity over this," Steve Blumenthal of the Houston chapter of VVA says. "A lot of vets feel it is giving them a bad name."

The museum reportedly has a few artifacts and some camouflage netting on display at a storefront operation in Houston, but apparently has not yet installed a telephone. Neither the museum nor Stevens is listed with Houston information.

Groups trying to help Vietnam veterans worry that the fakes cause damage in a way that cannot easily be seen. "When vets get into group therapy and discuss war trauma, it is a very confidential and trusting process," Oberg says. "If you open up to someone, and then find out he's not authentic, it's a very hurtful

feeling. Many vets have a lot of pain in their lives from rejection, and some interpret this as a form of rejection.

"Some veterans don't separate the components of their lives. What happened in terms of the government, their families, wives and friends," he continues, "are clumped together as one experience. They respond to all things with the same level of mistrust. I have seen vets get very hurt by wanna-be vets undermining their trust."

On another level, counterfeit vets delay the treatment of genuine vets by using up valuable group therapy time with their fantasies. Veterans groups have been particularly vulnerable to deceit because vets' etiquette says you do not challenge your fellows. Even the leadership of various groups has at times been infiltrated.

Op Sunburn; Honolulu: '68

Last August the Vietnam Veterans Resource and Service Center in Dallas was the subject of scandal when its executive director, John Woods, admitted he had lied about his military record. Also a technical "Vietnam-era" vet with service in the Coast Guard, Woods had invented a tour in Vietnam, when in truth, he served a year stationed in Honolulu. His early discharge was brought on by repeated drug abuse while on board ship. Woods, too, had a criminal record, with prison time for drug- and firearms-related convictions.

The revelations concerning Woods were akin to a bad rerun for Dallas-area

veterans. A year earlier Joe Testa, president of the local chapter of the VVA, was found to have a bogus background.

During his tenure with the VVA, Testa told many horror tales of watching his buddies die in combat, and also of seeing fellow veterans mistreated at home by antiwar protesters. He sometimes wore a uniform bearing sergeant's stripes and a Silver Star for gallantry in action.

Again, Testa was indeed a veteran — but he never left the States. He served 21 months, during which time he never rose above the rank of private; went AWOL repeatedly; and received two sentences of hard labor, both of which were suspended. After his discharge, he was convicted at least four times for credit card abuse and theft by check.

In an odd twist, Testa himself confronted another phony veteran while he was serving as the Dallas VVA chapter head. A woman claiming to have been a combat nurse in Vietnam turned out to have been a dental hygienist stationed near San Antonio. She apologized for lying, then asked the group's permission to speak at a college forum on behalf of women who served in Vietnam. Testa reportedly rejected the request, and admonished the woman for faking her service record.

As outlandish as these stories are, however, they are not the first of their kind.

“This is not an unusual phenomenon,” Smith says. “You can read in history about people who embellished their service records or made them up when they hadn't served. It is important to put this in perspective.”

One of the most notorious cases in recent history is that of “Tail-Gunner” Joe McCarthy, the crusading senator from Wisconsin. McCarthy gained much political mileage from his reputation as a combat tail-gunner in World War II. He also was allegedly wounded in combat. But McCarthy's true assignment was that of an intelligence officer debriefing the real combat pilots as they returned from missions over islands held by the Japanese.

McCarthy's experience with a tail gun was limited to joy-ride missions against coconut trees. His famous war wound was actually sustained falling down a stairwell.



Most angered by phony Vietnam veterans are the guys who went through the real thing and got spit on for it when they came home. Pictured is PFC Richard Riffle debarking from a Huey prior to an assault on Dragon Valley, 15 miles west of Chu Lai. Photo: Mabie/DoD

real veterans were quite angry about it and they protested these false claims.”

Not surprisingly, the genuine Vietnam vets are also very angry that phonies are cashing in on the service of others. “We have an obligation to the memory of my brothers who served to keep the record straight,” Smith says. “War is a high-cost experience. It ought not be trivialized by people aggrandizing themselves so they can get prestige, or a date with a girl. The American people deserve better than that.”

How to guard against frauds?

Sometimes you can't — at least not entirely. But there are ways to reduce the likelihood of being scammed.

Certain lines and phrases can be dead giveaways. Very few wanna-be's, for example, claim to have been clerk typists based in the States; they all take on mantles as combat pilots, SEALs or Green Berets on super-secret missions. They typically claim to be the sole survivor of a massacre, or to have performed impossible rescues.

When confronted with the lack of documentation for their deeds, the phonies deliver a stock response: their assignments were so sensitive, the military has destroyed all evidence, including service records of persons involved. This, of course, is nonsense. Even in the case of

His eventual exposure made him an object of public ridicule.

A number of bogus claims were made following World War I regarding the famed Lafayette Escadrille. The group was formed in April 1916, a year before the United States entered the war, and was set up so that American airmen could fight for France without violating neutrality restrictions. The unit acquired a romantic and heroic reputation when men who served with less prestigious units (and some who didn't serve at all) later claimed to have flown with it.

“It was a major case of cashing in,” military historian Jon Guttman says. “The

genuine secret missions, there is always a service record containing plausible cover duties.

“A fake vet can be determined through an investigation of claims,” Mark Katz says. “If someone is talking to you and has his times, locations and other details wrong, then you know you have a fake on your hands. The problem is, how many people know what to look for?”

“Little things can be done,” Oberg says. “When we sign a waiver saying he is telling the truth under penalty of perjury. We get his DD-214, plus his 201 file, which is the military war record. That turns up what the person did, his testing scores, the whole ball of wax.”

The services, meanwhile, might do well to follow that advice themselves. During Operation Desert Storm, the Pentagon narrowly averted disaster when it learned that a special operative dispatched on a mission to the Persian Gulf had been through none of the special warfare schools indicated on his resume. The faker was uncovered by chance, when he happened to sit next to a genuine operative in a bar, and happened to rattle off specifics about his alleged training.

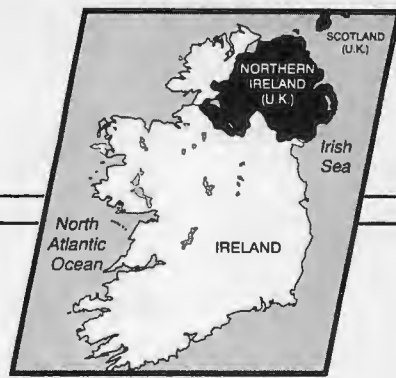
The stories didn't ring quite true to the listener. One thing led to another, and an investigation was soon underway. The imposter was yanked from the field in the nick of time, just as he was about to lead his unsuspecting team to certain failure.

“You have to do the moral equivalent of turning on the light to look for cockroaches,” Smith says. “Press people. Ask for verification.”

Susan Katz Keating is a Washington-based journalist who specializes in military and intelligence issues. She is a veteran of the U.S. Army (yes, we checked).

The closest Gaylord Stevens ever got to Vietnam is this display in the museum he and Kenneth Bonner started in San Antonio, Texas. Ironically, they duped each other, as neither turned out to be a Vietnam vet. Photo: Andy King for *Insight*





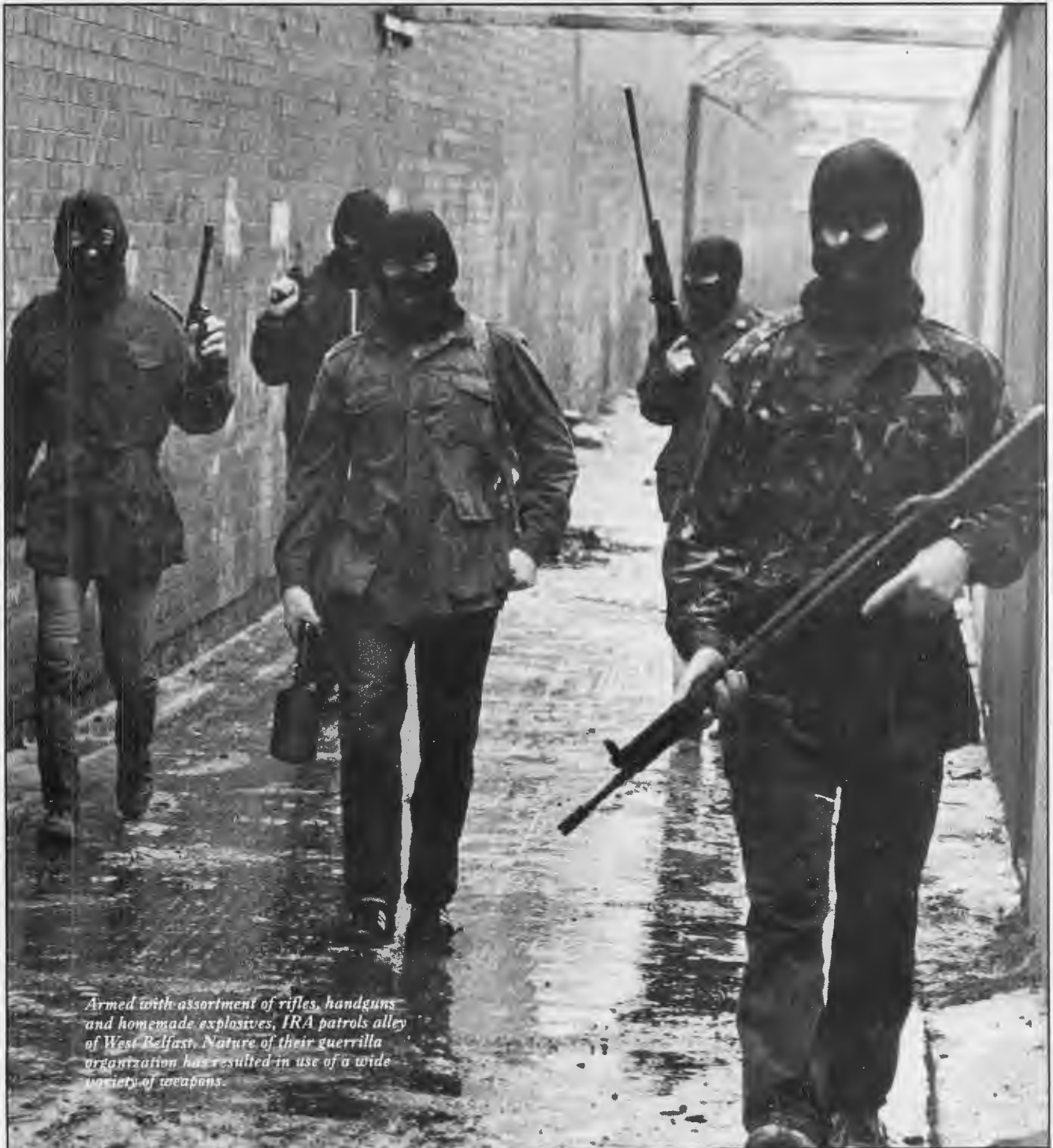
INSIDE

SOF Behind the Emerald

by Scott Smith

Photos by Republican News

The Long Gray War



Armed with assortment of rifles, handguns and homemade explosives, IRA patrols alley of West Belfast. Nature of their guerrilla organization has resulted in use of a wide variety of weapons.

THE IRA

Curtain

About every two or three issues of SOF you'll see FLAK letters either damning or praising us for our coverage of "the troubles" in Northern Ireland. In many cases, these letters take issue with other FLAK letters we've printed from readers who support — or despise — the IRA or its British Security Force opposition. Touchy, in a word, describes our readers' feelings about the issue.

Some months back we received a query letter from Scott Smith, the author of this piece, asking if we'd be interested in an article telling the IRA's side of the story. Our reaction here at SOF was, to put it mildly, mixed.

Our position on the Irish Republican Army is clear: we view its members as

terrorists, those who systematically and indiscriminately use terror, violence and intimidation to achieve their ends. By that it should be clear we do not in any shape or form support the organization or its activities; in fact, our sympathies clearly lie with the other side, as evidenced by the numerous articles we've run on Northern Ireland during the past decade.

Yet ... war is war, and we're in the business to cover it. As Smith wrote to us, "Know Thy Enemy" — if nothing else, that would justify the coverage," and to a certain extent we had to agree. After all, the IRA is an organization clouded in mist and myth, and propaganda from both sides. And whether you love or hate the IRA, it's not going to vanish overnight.

Since Smith was headed to Northern Ireland anyway, we told him we'd look at

his work. Coincidentally, Chief Foreign Correspondent Dr. Tom Marks was on assignment for us in Northern Ireland at roughly the same time, covering Security Force operations. When Tom returned he wrote his report (which begins on page 74), and we had him review Smith's article. His response: "They make perfect night-and-day companion pieces." That was our feeling too.

We understand Scott Smith's article on the IRA — and the fact that we published it — will draw bitter criticism from some quarters. So be it. But we know our readers, and give them far more credit for their ability to differentiate truth from falsehood than do our detractors.

— John Coleman

THE odds are formidable: 30,000 British troops in Northern Ireland, armed to the teeth with the most sophisticated weaponry, against 500 ragtag members of *Oglaigh na Heireann* ("oh-glee nuh herin," Gaelic for "Volunteers of Ireland"), better known as the Irish Republican Army (IRA). And yet, as any senior British officer will admit, these guerrillas cannot be defeated.

On the wall of British military headquarters in Ulster is a painting of an armed IRA man: underneath are the words, "Respect the Enemy." And respect is what the enemy gets. The commander of Scotland Yard's antiterrorist squad, George Churchill-Coleman, admits, "They're extremely clever, versatile and professional."

James Adams, defense correspondent for the *Times* of London and author of the anti-IRA book *The Financing of Terror* observes: "The IRA uses what weapons they have with great skill. Their bomb-making techniques, uses of modern detonators and timers, as well as their tactics, show good training and a high capability ... No other terrorist group in the world can match their skill on the ground ... Of all the terrorist groups that currently exist, the IRA commands the most respect among counterterrorist teams and among

other terrorists."

As many as 8,000 members may have passed through the ranks of the IRA, but the IRA itself won't talk about numbers of volunteers. "We have as many as we need and there is a long waiting list," one of its leaders has said. In 1977 it was reorganized into a cell system. The decision to limit itself to its current size was for internal security. At the time of the reorganization, both the IRA and the British switched to a less intense war of selective assassination, requiring fewer soldiers in the field.

To downplay the significance of the IRA, British officials claim there are only 150-300 members. They do acknowledge, however, that the Republican Party (Sinn Fein) is supported by about 40% of Northern Catholics and a British poll some years ago showed 20% of those in the Irish Republic also were sympathetic.

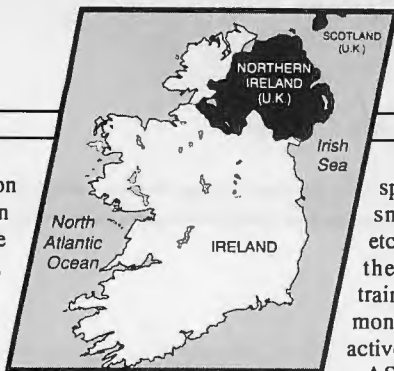
Theoretically, one has to be 17 to join, but younger members have been killed. Typically, someone on the front line will be in his early- to mid-20s (25% are female), unemployed from the working class, from a family with a Republican

tradition, and will have a deep knowledge of Irish history and politics. They are motivated by a simple but deep patriotism; the pseudo-psychology of "terrorism experts" who label them with pathological impulses is well-paid propaganda.

Contrary to propaganda, there are few Marxists in the IRA. The poverty into which most of the people are born, however, inclines them toward a Gaelic version of democratic socialism (decentralized government, nationalization of

IRA volunteers prepare for ambush somewhere in Northern Ireland countryside. Man on left has walkie-talkie and UZI submachine gun; man in middle loads grenade launcher; femme fatale on right gets her German G-3 rifle ready. One-fourth of IRA members are female.





financial services, ban on large farms and foreign ownership of the land). The IRA has acknowledged, however, that even if it wanted to, it would not be able to impose such a government on the Irish people, most of whom are far too conserva-

The Long Gray War

Products Of Brutality

Volunteers are the products of the brutality of the British Security Forces. Most IRA members were beaten frequently before they joined. Many have been tortured both physically and psychologically according to the British army's own doctors. Catholics in general are constantly harassed. They are held incommunicado for days and their homes are torn apart in futile weapons searches.

The new volunteer swears fealty to the idealized Republic outlined in the Proclamation of the 1916 Easter Rising (Uprising), the guiding inspiration of the modern IRA. The daily life of a member is expected to be sternly guided by the *Green Book*, the IRA manual which preaches against drinking, admonishes members to live noble lives and forbids talking about IRA business with non-members.

New members face bleak lives. Socializing is kept to a minimum. A volunteer sought by the army might see his family once or twice a year, and weeks at a time may be spent in miserable living conditions. If captured, he can be sent to prison for a decade or two on unsubstantiated charges, given the loose evidence requirements of the Ulster courts. Currently, members are not even paid.

Volunteers are grouped into active service units (ASUs) of three to 10, usually four or five with a leader. Each cell

specializes in bombing, sniping, intelligence, etc. The new member is then sent into such training for three to six months before going into active service.

ASUs may draw members from anywhere, but favor locals who know the terrain. In 1977, the battalion and company system, modeled on the British army, was discarded and ASUs now communicate (through their leader) directly to a brigade staff coordinator and through him to other ASUs (although members are not supposed to know their identities).

Brigades have a degree of autonomy in pursuing standard operations and provide resources to the ASUs from intelligence to medics (although the latter are very limited and seriously injured volunteers must turn themselves in to hospitals, resulting in their arrest). The brigade quartermaster controls weapons, issuing to ASUs only what they need for individual operations.

The exception to this are commando units, whose members carry a magnum revolver, automatic rifle, combat knife and bomb-making material for weeks at a time in rural areas. They sleep in fields, hay sheds, underground bunkers or abandoned farm houses during the day and move at night.

Brigades also operate the civil administration, the department which provides "policing" at the request of Republican strongholds. This primarily consists of shooting "criminals" in the legs or ordering drug dealers out of the country on threat of death.

There are generally two brigades to a county, with the Belfast Brigade, located on the border of North Down and South

Antrim, handling activities in both areas. South Down, populated mostly by loyalists, is designated a command, because local units are not numerous enough to constitute a brigade.

Tough Neighborhoods

Of the brigades, Belfast is by far the most active, but the one with the toughest reputation is South Armagh. In that border area the British army cannot travel on the roads safely and has to do everything from delivering troops to taking out garbage by helicopter.

Rumors that South Armagh operates without regard to the IRA leadership are baseless because the brigades are dependent on headquarters for their resources. Derry, the second largest city in the province and furthest from Belfast, has been somewhat ignored by the Belfast-based leadership, however, and has been plagued by lax security and corruption.

Northern Command was instituted in 1976 to provide overall coordination of brigade operations in the northeastern six counties. Southern Command, operating out of Dublin, oversees weapons manufacturing, storage and transport, training at southern camps, safe houses in the Irish Republic, intelligence and so forth.

Overseeing both, but conceding responsibility for the daily confrontation with British forces to Northern Command, is general headquarters (GHQ). Comprising a small group of leaders who meet frequently, GHQ is headed by the chief of staff (CS). The CS picks a number two adjutant general and other officers as needed, typically for operations, training, education, quartermaster, finance and publicity. GHQ also runs the Overseas and England Departments, and only a handful of top people know who is operating those.

The adjutant general is in charge of internal security and runs a highly sophisticated interrogation team in safe houses on the southern side of the border. The Provisional IRA (PIRA) learned from the IRA of the 1920s that success depends on dealing ruthlessly with informers.

The Security Department has largely prevented the British from knowing who is in the IRA leadership and has been responsible for the execution of nearly 50 informers, known colloquially as "touts." Hundreds of others have been sent into

Armed with M16, IRA guerrilla guards row of homemade mortars. Constructed from brewery canisters, metal cylinders are filled with 50 lbs. of explosives and fired from industrial tubes. Such a mortar was used in the February attack at 10 Downing Street, which came within 50 ft. of wiping out British War Cabinet.

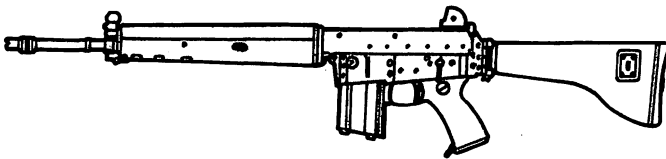


WEAPONS: IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY



AKM

The Kalashnikov has been the most prolific rifle of the post-World War II era. It has been the mainstay of the communist bloc, appearing in the hands of insurgents, terrorists and Eastern-influenced armies throughout the world. Conceptually influenced by the German "sturmgewehr" (assault rifle), the AK-47, and later the AKM, have been made in numbers some estimate as high as 50 million. Firing a 7.62x39mm round, the AKM is a robust, reliable and deadly weapon. The IRA prefers the Romanian variant, featuring a distinctive forward pistol grip.



Armalite AR-18

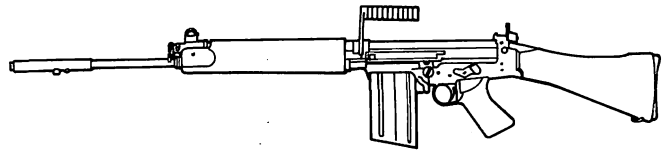
The AR-18 was designed as a low-cost 5.56mm alternative to the AR-15/M16 family of weapons for Third World countries ill-equipped to handle the manufacture of more complicated and expensive weapons. Though it never gained wide acceptance on world military markets, its folding stock, inherent accuracy and ability to be broken down into small packages make it a favorite of the IRA; it has the nickname "widow maker" in Northern Ireland. It was produced in the United States, England and Japan. The semi-auto civilian version is the AR-180.



Beretta PM 12

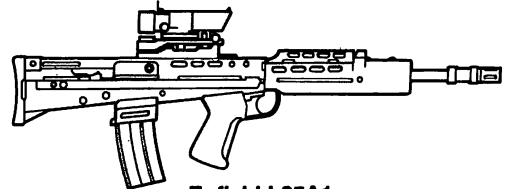
As an underground force, whose supply of weapons is always changing, the IRA uses a diverse range of firearms — everything from M1 Garands to the modern Beretta Model 12 submachine gun. The Model 12, like the UZI, features a bolt that telescopes the barrel, enabling a relatively long barrel to be housed in a compact weapon, which enables its 9mm round to gain maximum velocity and fairly good accuracy. The Model 12 is a very reliable, well-made and fast-handling weapon.

WEAPONS: BRITISH SECURITY FORCES



L1A1 Self-Loading Rifle (SLR)

The L1A1 was the first modern rifle adapted by the British army that had not been designed in Britain. The L1A1 is a semiautomatic variant of the Belgian FN FAL, a rifle that has been used with great success in more than 60 countries. Firing the potent 7.62x51mm (.308 Winchester) cartridge, the L1A1 is a reliable, accurate, sturdy battle rifle that proved its salt in the Falklands. It is currently being phased out in favor of the new 5.56mm SA80, although the silhouette of British troops clutching long L1A1s is still a common sight in Northern Ireland.



Enfield L85A1

The L85A1, also known as the SA80, is Britain's latest offering in 5.56mm military rifles. The SA80, like the Steyr AUG and the French FA MAS, is in a bull-pup configuration, allowing a long barrel to be housed in a short rifle. Although accurate and compact, the design and its execution are seriously flawed, and reliability in the field has been below acceptable levels. The rifle is issued with a four-power magnification SUSAT scope and, although it has its own magazine, the magazine for the M16 will fit as well.



Sterling L2A3

The Sterling L2A3 is one of Britain's last links to the past. George Patchett filed the first patents for this weapon in 1942, and prototype models using Lanchester/Sten magazines were first used at Arnhem in 1944. After trials that continued through and after the war, the L2A1 was adopted in 1953. The L2A1/L2A2/L2A3 series has been the standard submachine gun of the British army since that time. With a robust and reliable, if now somewhat outdated, conventional design, the L2A3's strength and simplicity are two factors that keep it in use in more than 90 countries. The L2A3 fires a 9mm cartridge and is also issued in a sound-suppressed version — an option that has often been used by the British in Northern Ireland.

exile when there were mitigating circumstances and they were not members of the IRA.

All interrogations are taped and, contrary to popular reports, trials are elaborate affairs. Only when the IRA leadership is certain of someone's guilt, will an execution take place. Having investigated numerous allegations about the IRA using torture to extract information, I found only a few cases of beatings administered at low, unofficial levels. No matter how convincing they seemed, stories of IRA torture turned out

to be lies and fantasies.

From its own experiences at the hands of the army and police, the IRA knows that forced statements are unreliable, and decided it would be counterproductive to extract them. In fact, the IRA finds those it questions so cooperative — perhaps in the hope they will escape execution or redeem their names — that it has used sodium pentothal (truth serum) only once.

Above GHQ (whose CS it appoints) is the seven-member Army Council (AC) — the ultimate IRA authority. It is elected from among the 12-member Army

Executive, an advisory body which is supposed to be selected at a general army convention every two years. Because of the war, only one convention has been held since 1970 — in October 1986, when the new Army Council was elected. Rare vacancies are filled by a consensus of AC members, the current mix consisting of individuals serving as GHQ staff and brigade commanders.

IRA Weaponry Of Choice

In the early 1970s, Armalite AR-15 and AR-18 rifles were favored by the IRA.

AN IRA CHRONOLOGY OF "THE TROUBLES"



The conquest of Ireland by its neighbor began in 1169, but it was not until the Gaelic clans were defeated in 1603 that the Crown consolidated its hold. To secure the most rebellious province, Ulster, loyalist Scottish and English Protestants displaced the Catholic natives, laying the foundation for today's "troubles."

In every generation there are rebels, but it was not until the Easter Rising of 1916 that the movement for independence saw any success. The execution of its leaders turned a previously apathetic public toward nationalism, and by 1921, the British were brought to the bargaining table with the IRA. British officials persuaded the Irish representatives to let part of Ulster remain in the U.K. Hard-line elements in the IRA rebelled against this, leading to a bitter civil war between the dissidents and the new regime installed in Dublin by the British government. The struggle ended in 1923 with the defeat of opponents of the treaty with Britain.

The current phase of violence began in 1966 when loyalists randomly began killing Catholics to stifle their rising nationalism in the North. The Catholic civil rights movement grew anyway, but was brutally crushed by the Protestant provincial police. The resulting riots threatened to topple the local government and the British army intervened. The army's assaults on the minority ghettos only drove the Catholics into the arms of the IRA.

The official IRA evolved into a Marxist debating society. Later it took up arms, but the anticommunist, traditional Republicans broke away in December 1969 to form the Provisional IRA (PIRA), the organization usually referred to when speaking of "the IRA" (known colloquially as the "Rah" or Provos).

Chronology of British-IRA confrontation:

- 1971:** First British soldier killed by Provisionals; internment of Republicans without trial begins; prisoners tortured. Republicans seal off part of Belfast and Derry for a year; 174 die.
- 1972:** British army kills 14 civil rights demonstrators in Derry. London takes over provincial government; 467 die.
- 1973:** Juryless Diplock courts established to process suspected guerrillas; 250 die.
- 1974:** Protestants strike against British attempt to set up provincial government in which Catholics would share power. Loyalists kill 27 in Irish Republic. IRA accidentally kills 21 in pub bombings in Birmingham, England; 216 die.
- 1975:** Cease-fire between IRA and British army; 247 die anyway.
- 1976-1980:** British government withdraws de facto POW status for imprisoned IRA members.
- 1980:** Republicans go on "blanket protest" wearing only bed blankets instead of prison uniforms. British use various methods to try to force nonconforming prisoners to bend to "criminalization" strategy. War winds down; 75 die.
- 1981:** Failure to achieve POW status leads Bobby Sands, officer commanding IRA in H-Blocks/Maze prison, to go on hunger strike. One month later, Sands is elected member of Parliament. After another month, he dies in prison—100,000 attend his funeral. Nine other prisoners die without government concessions, but after strike, conditions are quietly granted.
- 1983:** Gerry Adams, president of Sinn Fein, elected member of Parliament.
- 1984:** IRA misses killing Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher at Brighton by minutes.
- 1985:** London and Dublin governments sign agreement giving latter advisory role in North in exchange for increased security cooperation; 54 die.
- 1987:** Internal feud decimates (Marxist) Irish National Liberation Army; SAS ambush at Loughgall kills eight IRA members and one civilian. IRA bomb accidentally kills 11 at Enniskillen; 93 die.
- 1990:** IRA kills three soldiers, ex-adviser to Thatcher and two tourists (by mistake) outside Northern Ireland; 78 die.
- 1991:** IRA mortar bomb comes within 50 feet of taking out British War Cabinet. Talks begin between British and Irish governments and loyalists and non-Republican Northern Catholics, but collapse in July.

Total deaths in Northern Ireland in 23 years: approximately 2,900—1,100 of which the IRA is responsible. In terms of ratio, the impact of those killed on the 1.5 million citizens of Northern Ireland is equivalent to seven Vietnam Wars on the U.S.

— S.S.

Japanese-made AR-18s and Chinese SKS rifles made their way to Ireland, but the general choice was the semiautomatic AR-15 from the United States. The Colt Carbine with its telescoping stock made concealment easy. On a wall in Derry appeared a mural with the words, "God made the Catholics but the Armalite made them equal."

There were lots of M14s and Soviet AK-47 and AKM assault rifles, UZIs and German G-3s. The favored weapon now is a Romanian AKM with a vertical lower handguard. There is also every conceivable variety of handgun, with Browning High Power, and .357 Magnum revolvers most favored.

The IRA also has flamethrowers for burning barracks. In 1986, it introduced a homemade impact grenade, known as a drogue bomb, which has proven quite effective. There are also homegrown rocket-propelled grenade (RPG) launchers. Individual and vehicle armor have become so heavy on the British side, they usually can resist heavy assaults. (IRA members, however, seldom use bulletproof vests except when in the countryside.) Recently, there were two direct RPG hits on a "pig" (the standard British troop transport) with no casualties. Sometimes a British vest can be penetrated, but the IRA mostly relies on one-shot sniping to the head or point-blank shooting. Recently, the IRA used a "directional missile," a horizontally aimed mortar shot at close range, to destroy a "pig," but generally mines are used against armored vehicles.

The "Mark 10" IRA mortar has an accurate range of 300 yards and came within 50 feet of wiping out the British War Cabinet at 10 Downing Street in February 1991. The mortar bomb is made from brewery canisters and filled with 50 pounds of explosives. The fins are soldered-on heating vanes. Projectiles are fired from industrial tubes, and a small propeller on the nose screws a firing pin into position to strike a cap on impact.

Connections

World War II-vintage Browning .50 caliber heavy machine guns and M60 GPMGs from the United States have been used to shoot down helicopters, and more recently the IRA has started using ComBloc 12.7mm antiaircraft machine guns. Rumors that the IRA has surface-to-air missiles have persisted since the late 1970s, but the IRA has never used them, even though British helicopters have been up-armored and issued decoy equipment in anticipation of such an attack.

The United States ceased to be a prime source of weapons in 1981 when members

of a smuggling ring were arrested.

The IRA has never been influenced by its sources of arms. It buys most of its weapons on the international market, and has had no significant ties with other guerrilla or terrorist groups.

It likes the African National Congress (ANC) and the Basque separatist movement (ETA), but abhors the Red Army Faction and similar groups. A senior army source said there has never been evidence of training by the Palestinian Liberation Organization (PLO), although the IRA once bought a shipload of weapons from it that was later captured.

IRA bomb-makers are termed engineers. They are estimated to have 5 tons of Czechoslovakian Semtex plastic explosive, but mostly rely on fertilizer. In 1977, the IRA began using an effective compound called ANFO by cooking aluminum nitrate-based fertilizer and mixing the resulting solids with diesel oil and metal filings.

The size of the bombs range from an incendiary of a few ounces of sugar and flammable liquid, to car bombs (a Belfast invention) of more than 1,000 pounds of explosives (the trunk will be packed with fertilizer and a primer of commercial explosive, plus a detonator and timer).

Most commonly, a beer barrel or metal milk container will be made into a bomb and hidden by the side of a road or placed against a barracks wall. The timing of the detonation of the Brighton bomb which almost killed former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in 1984 was determined months in advance by an electronic timer from Canada, based on those used in video recorders.

Land mines can be triggered by pressure plates or occasionally by trip wire, but these are risky methods if civilians pass by. Usually, detonation is achieved by command wire (detonators are homemade using mercury fulminate). The most popular method of triggering is by radio, based on the McGregor 27 series equipment for model airplanes.

To prevent accidental detonation by British electronic sweeping equipment, the



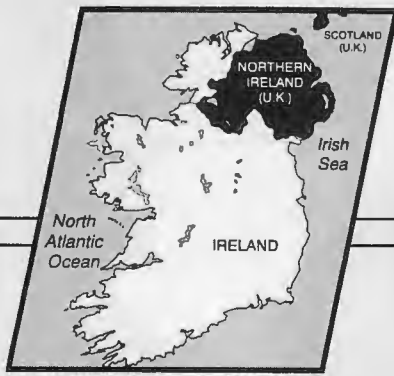
IRA volunteer displays homemade impact grenade. Known as a drogue bomb, this simple yet effective explosive was first introduced in 1986.

firing message is pulse-coded (but the technology is imperfect — evidence suggests that a British sweeping device triggered the IRA bomb at Enniskillen in November 1987, killing 11 people). In 1979, the Irish National Liberation Army began using the mercury tilt-switch method of detonation used in World War II, which is movement-activated. The IRA uses this in bombs it attaches under cars used by British Security Forces.

That the IRA is a guerrilla organization and not "terrorist" (defined as intentionally targeting noncombatants), is shown by the fact that it gives warnings when civilians may be endangered. Atrocities still happen because the IRA uses unreliable materials and there are human errors. In the case of the Birmingham Pub bombings of 1974, when 21 people were killed, the phones designated to call in warnings had been vandalized.

In February of this year, one person was killed at London's Victoria Station because British officials chose to ignore

Continued on page 98



The Long Gray War

STALKI

SOF Tracks Northern Ireland

by Dr. Tom Marks

Photos Courtesy Dr. Tom Marks



NG THE IRA

nd's Terrorists



STANDING by their stalled car, the young couple looks about for help. Fortunately, two policemen happen to be strolling by. Before long, the policemen are under the hood themselves, trying to get the beast started. Bystanders pause a moment, their curiosity piqued, then move on with their business.

So ordinary is this episode that it would hardly merit comment if it weren't for the team of soldiers providing security.

Dressed and armed for combat, they form a loose protective arc around the car scene. Every rifle is equipped with a scope, and the troops periodically jerk to firing positions as they use the lens to examine more closely a suspicious movement on a rooftop or down the street. Fingers are taut, one on the trigger, the other one on the safety. Even when they relax, their rifles lowered, their eyes continue to scan the area.

This is daily existence in one of the world's most well-known yet least understood conflicts, the sectarian struggle of Northern Ireland. Few are unfamiliar with its general outlines: Protestants and Catholics killing each other in a bloodletting that represents centuries of struggle for a united Ireland. The Catholics want to be united with the motherland; the Protestants cling to Britain. British troops, foreigners all in a land they little care for or understand, lock horns with the "battling boyos" of the IRA, or Irish Republican Army, standard-bearers of Irish independence and unity.

That, at least, is the myth — one peddled, it must be noted immediately, by at least several U.S. Congressmen. Reality, as might be suspected, is another story.

In the meantime, though, reality for the policemen is the car engine, which, despite their best efforts, refuses to start. They shrug helplessly, summon a tow truck, and begin to move on. Their human shield, the four soldiers of the team, do likewise, one

eye on their charges, the other on the gray streets of West Belfast.

This is a Catholic area, an expanse of brick row houses divided only by narrow streets and neat, small front yards. Identical in every way, the row houses are heated by fireplaces. Looking up, you expect Mary Poppins to appear amidst the forest of chimneys, but there is only the gray sky. Bundled against the cold, the inhabitants emerge and disappear, alone or with children in tow. It's all so very ordinary.

But Everybody Looks Alike

I can hear the objection: But aren't they Catholics? The oppressed masses? ... What am I to respond? Well, yes, they are oppressed, sort of ... And don't they hate their oppressors? The police and the soldiers? ... Well, not really ... maybe some of them ... well, sort of... Oh Christ, who knows? Let's find one and ask him. What does a Catholic look like, anyhow?

Now, that's a problem. Everybody looks alike! Looking around, only the churches look "Catholic." And only a few listless Irish tricolor flags and the pro-IRA murals give indication that this is a "hostile" area.

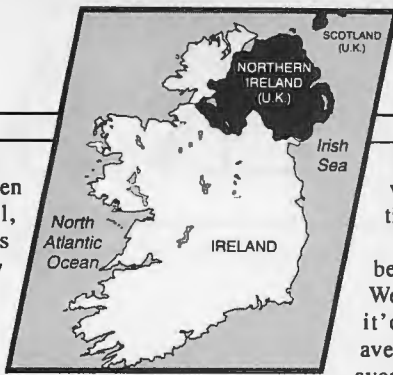
And the people are no help, either. They just act like normal citizens going about their business. Nobody even looks oppressed. Neither do the children. To the contrary, the kids seem to think it's all bloody marvelous. They've been told it's quite acceptable to throw rocks at the armored Land-Rovers as they trundle by, and even, sometimes, at the nasty soldiers. But most of the time they simply cluster in childlike wonder every time one of the soldiers with the fancy toys pauses.

As the Argyll nearest me, a Scot, peers through his scope, a small hand touches his arm. "'Ave a look?" The soldier grins and nods. Soon a line of small terrorists is exploring the ins and outs of the telescopic sight. Those too young to be interested in the intricacies of firearms settle for pieces of candy.

It's all so very normal — and so very tedious.

Then, the team radio crackles. Hurried exchange: a few words to the team. In a

On the 20th anniversary of "the troubles," August 1989, woman shouts at British soldier in West Belfast. Many who support republicanism appear to do so because it is a symbol for better status in world.



The Long Gray War

blur, soldiers and policemen sprint past. Downhill, around a bend, the troops move flat-footed, bent by the weight of their equipment. The policemen whip off their hats and hold their flapping gear at their sides. One uses his sleeve to wipe the rapidly forming beads of sweat from his brow.

Rifles are ready; the team and its accompanying men in dark blue spring down a lane of rowhouses. The troops pop from yard to yard, gate to gate, always covering each other. The cops make a straight run down the way.

All around, other teams are doing the same. We converge on a single flat in a lengthy row. In the background, within rifle range, looms a substantial observation tower used by the police to keep an eye on things. Someone has reportedly opened up on it with a machine gun.

Senior authority quickly establishes order. Teams establish security down every street leading to the flat, front and back; the scene of the crime is taped off; a thorough search of the area is conducted;

Troops take cover during explosion in Belfast on 20th anniversary of "the troubles."

witnesses are questioned.

We've seen it all before, have we not? Were it not for the troops, it'd be just another average incident in an average moment in an average American city — the only thing that's missing is Kojak.

As the police carry on, the troops shift positions slightly, always keeping their weapons at the ready. They ignore the goings-on at the flat. Most, in any case, are far enough away that they are in contact only through their radios. As the sun sinks, gloves are pulled on, feet stamped more often to ward off the chill that begins to nip at the toes.

Candy, M60s, And The Game Of War

Cold is the last thing on the minds of the local youngsters — the circus has come to town. They swarm about, making a game of everything from swinging on the engineer tape being used to seal off the area to sitting in the laps of soldiers. They ask for candy while giving us their experienced analysis of the episode.

"A man in a mask fired a burst at the tower with an automatic weapon," one of them deadpans. "It was a machine gun; looked like an M60. Then he jumped into a car."

Another gives me the once-over. "You photographers always be coming in here. You like to be getting the tricolor?"

A group of three presses forward. The oldest, 11 years old, observes, "You be college boys for sure." Intrigued by the presence of an alien (American) life form, they question my taste in women, want to know how my camera works, ask about America. Finally, they meander back to the real excitement, the soldiers.

The youngsters engage in their usual "show me" routine, then grow bored and look for additional ways to squeeze some excitement out of what had earlier promised to be a dreary afternoon. There's the incongruous sight of a lad on one side of the road engaged in an animated discussion with a soldier, while across the way an 11-year-old attempts to bait another member of the team.

"Why don't you go home?" the Irish would-be adult yells, mustering his best imitation of something he's heard from someone older than he.

"I'd like to," the 19-year-old Scottish soldier responds in a thick accent. "If you'd behave!"

They laugh. The game is known and recognized by both parties. No British regulars have been killed this year at all, though 40 have been injured. (The Ulster Defence Regiment, UDR, however, a regular unit but locally recruited and employed only in Northern Ireland, has been harder hit, with two dead and eight injured as of Easter 1991.)

The Troubles Come To Ulster

It's been nearly 22 years since the British deployed troops to Northern Ireland to restore order in August 1969. Then, a Catholic civil rights movement, inspired by the similar goings-on in the United States, had been co-opted by radicals. Their aggressive tactics had inspired a backlash, and Protestant paramilitaries began to attack Catholic working-class areas, after which Catholics turned to the IRA for protection.

In a flash, the moribund IRA had an army, and Ulster, as the north is called, had a problem. Protestant and



communities staked out their turfs; violence erupted.



Murdered man in what turned out to be a case of mistaken identity. A British army spokesman said there are about two incidents every 24 hours now, whereas in July 1972 there were 100 terrorist incidents every day.

Catholic communities staked out their turfs; violence erupted. The small, unprepared 3,000-man police force was overwhelmed. Enter the army.

Initially greeted as liberators by the Catholic community, the army enjoyed a brief honeymoon period. It did not last long. In its efforts to crack down on both Protestant and Catholic militants, the military succeeded in convincing many that it was an occupying power. This gave even further strength to the IRA, sending recruits flocking to its ranks.

By 1972, the security forces had 31 regular army battalions deployed to Northern Ireland, augmented by a further 11 battalions of the UDR — a total of 42 battalions operating in an area comparable to that of Connecticut, with just 1.5 million people. Deaths that year in what came to be called “the troubles” climbed to 467.

“I dare say, you could get that many (deaths) in any big U.S. city,” a British army spokesman told me. “But in a small place such as this, where everyone knows each other, it was quite traumatic.”

For the next three years, some 36,000 soldiers and policemen were kept busy. “These days,” the spokesman continues, “we get about two incidents every 24 hours. In July 1972 we had 100 terrorist-type incidents every day. For a backwater sort of place, this was quite a shock. Gradually, though, until 1985-1986, we were able to reduce the army strength from 22,000 to about 9,000. We were turning

over our duties to the police and were down to eight battalions. Then, in October 1985, the Anglo-Irish Agreement was signed (giving Dublin a consultative role in Ulster’s affairs). This caused things to surge again, because the agreement united the Protestant paramilitaries and the IRA in dislike of something. That’s the situation now.”

If that’s the situation “now,” what was it “then”? Why, in other words, is there a problem in Northern Ireland?

Not Just Protestant Against Catholic

Any number of explanations are at hand, from “British colonialism” to “IRA terrorism.” The bottom line, as far as the world is concerned, is that Protestants line up against Catholics. Yet even this is simplistic. What is certain, as a British officer put it, is that “the problem might be religion, but it’s certainly not Christianity. A lot of things are perpetrated in the name of religion.” “Protestants” and “Catholics,” in other words, are convenient labels for much more complicated phenomenon.

When the British, Protestants all, originally conquered “Ireland” four centuries ago, they found themselves in a wild, disunited, hostile, Catholic land. Indeed, Northern Ireland was traditionally the most Gaelic area of the island. Consequently, in 1609, the British set up the

Plantation of Ulster and encouraged settlement from the home country. They had a Protestant legislature established in 1692.

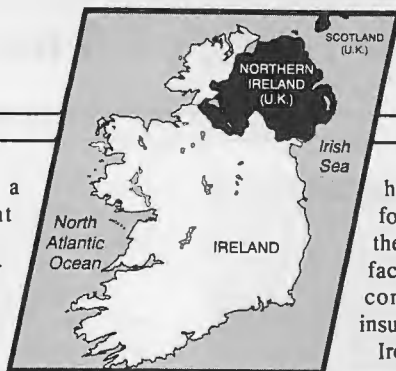
Thereafter, a series of “coercive acts” were implemented to protect the position of the settlers. By 1703, only 5% of the land in Ulster remained in Irish hands (the figure for Ireland as a whole was only slightly higher, 14%). In American terms, the cowboys had taken the land from the Indians. Thus, the divide between the two communities, Protestant and Catholic, became institutionalized.

Soon to break down this separation. As agricultural society gave way to industrialization, substantial demographic shifts brought the two communities shoulder-to-shoulder in urban areas. There, they competed for jobs and housing. The year 1835 saw the first serious communal riots. An impending civil war — as Protestants agitated for home rule, Catholics for independence — was averted by the outbreak of World War I.

In the post-war years, Britain sought to solve two problems at once: agitation for home rule as well as independence. It set up two states, the present Northern Ireland, and Ireland, each with its own legislature to deal with internal affairs. A Council of Ireland was to consider matters affecting both, and the two states were to have representatives in London, which would continue to control foreign affairs and defense. To further insure the viability of the north, three of the traditional nine counties that made up Ulster were shaved off, leaving the remainder, today’s

In many ways, community policemen and children of Belfast relate like policemen and kids anywhere else. “We have close family ties and religion,” a senior RUC constable says ... You hear so much about this place, but we’re certainly safer, even now, than in most of your American cities.”





Northern Ireland, with a two-third's Protestant majority.

British plans never worked out as anticipated, and the Council of Ireland did not become a reality. Instead, the independence issue was "settled" as Dublin went its own way, but the communal, sectarian problems of the new Ulster state came to the fore. Refusing to participate in the new institutions of local governance, which they saw as illegitimate, the Catholic community only made matters worse. For government did function in Ulster.

Birth Of A New IRA

With voting rights determined by property ownership (until 1969), and even those Catholics who qualified engaging in electoral boycotts, Protestants were able to dominate the affairs of state. The result was less than equal rights for Catholics and, eventually, the civil rights movement mentioned earlier.

At the time necessity drove London to intervene with troops, Northern Ireland was a quiet posting for a few battalions. As the units poured in, the authorities were forced to consider the likelihood that the

British soldiers in South Armagh get checked out by curious little boy. Photo: Pacemaker Press Intl. Ltd.



The Long Gray War

halcyon days were gone for good. In short order, they found themselves faced with a peculiar combination of insurgency and terrorism.

Ironically, the military presence, by creating an issue, gave the IRA the popular following it had lacked for some years. That

the IRA was not then a factor of particular importance on the local scene flies in the face of the common impression that there was an unending struggle against British "occupation." But such had, in fact, become the case, because even while partition institutionalized communalism, economic prosperity caused overt conflict to fade.

However, attacks by the Protestant paramilitaries ended any hope that the 1960s would be free of republican violence. Extremist leaders had risen to prominence in Northern Irish politics because moderates seemed unable to come up with viable solutions to the problems of administration.

On the other side of the fence, a similar process was at work. When the IRA decided to "go political," the extremists, those who refused to give up the "republican" cause of unity, formed the Provisional Irish Republican Army (PIRA). Loosely affiliated with the IRA, which even today continues to engage in open politics, PIRA became the resistance

movement (although the old "IRA" label still enjoys widespread use).

Initially, PIRA continued the IRA practice of fielding ever-larger units made up of numerous volunteers who flocked to its colors. "Yet we were able to infiltrate those," a British army representative said. "So the military side adopted the Active Service Unit (ASU) cell structure. Brigades were divided into cells of four or five men each, all compartmentalized. There was less risk of compromise. They tightened up their ship. They have ASUs all over still with less chance of the authorities infiltrating them."

In practical terms, this meant that the British, after facing a broad-based resistance movement, found the enemy had changed. London now had to deal with PIRA terrorism and its ability to strike at will, even as far afield as Britain itself, or Germany, where British units were stationed with allied forces. Further, the cell structure gave the security forces very little opportunity to gain the intelligence needed to smash this new opponent.

Search For Cash And Weapons

Likewise, the move to covert cells insulated PIRA from the negative effects that could earlier have been expected as Catholic support for violence declined. PIRA was able to carry out its actions with minimal requirement for popular assistance. Instead, its greatest needs became cash and weapons.

For cash, PIRA drew upon a variety of sources. Besides such traditional methods as taking up collections, sponsoring pubs, and simply robbing banks and payrolls, it moved wholesale into racketeering. (Ironically, in this campaign PIRA found itself rubbing shoulders with its sworn enemies, the Protestant paramilitaries, who were also seeking funds.)

"We estimate it must take 4 to 5 million pounds per year (approximately \$7-9 million U.S.)," a top police official said, "to keep the Provos (members of PIRA) going. They get it from many sources. Racketeering has become a big

enough problem that we have had to set up a special unit. They (PIRA) are into video piracy in a big way, extracting money from clubs, black taxis (consider 40 pounds per week per cab x 300 cabs — or approximately \$90,000 per month, or more than a million dollars per year), clubs, slot machines, smuggling, and shakedowns of building contractors and real estate agents. The Provos are not yet into drugs, though others are. They could easily get involved, but they see the drug scene as counterproductive. Church and state, North and South, are dead opposed. So they stick with more conventional activities.”

The U.S. Connection

One of these activities has been to raise funds from the Irish-American community, ostensibly for charitable work in Northern Ireland. In late 1979, British officials estimated that Americans contributed more to PIRA than the citizens of any other country. They further stated that the largest single American source of cash, as much as \$300,000 per year, was the New York-based Irish Northern Aid Committee (Noraid). Crackdowns have since left their mark. “The American contribution has declined a great deal,” a British official noted. “It still goes on, but nothing like it was before.”

Less certain is the degree to which arms shipments have been interrupted. Initially, as in the case of funds, the United States was a major source. In late September 1984, for instance, the Irish navy made one of the largest arms hauls in Irish history, seizing a trailer carrying arms from a mother ship that had departed the American coast. Yet this was apparently the tip of the iceberg. The Mafia was actively involved in stealing weapons from U.S. military bases and then shipping them to Ireland. Even private individuals had gotten into the act. Between 1973 and late 1979, 22 Americans were convicted of unlawfully sending arms to Ulster.

More recently, in mid-1989, the FBI arrested two Americans and an Irish national while obtaining a warrant for a



IRA terrorist's funeral sparks riot between IRA supporters and police in West Belfast.

second Irish national for attempting to build for PIRA sophisticated explosive devices, as well as antihelicopter missiles. The three arrested, according to press reports, were electronics specialists employed in the American military weapons industry.

Though such activities apparently continue, PIRA turned elsewhere, especially to Libya. In November 1987, French officials seized more than 150 tons of arms and explosives from a Panamanian-registered cargo ship. Originating in Libya and bound for PIRA, the cargo included 20 SAM-7 missile launchers, 20 tons of mortar shells, and thousands of other weapons, including machine guns.

“We feel two earlier shipments just like that one got through,” a British official said. “The Provos have abundant Semtex (the Czechoslovakian explosive supplied to Libya). We have indications that they have more than enough weapons, too. Before, they would go to great lengths to keep their weapons, but now they frequently abandon them when making their getaway.”

Thus it is that PIRA has money and arms. So it has little need of a popular base. It can pursue its professional goal — to drive the British from Northern Ireland — oblivious to the attitudes of “its people.” To do this, it intends to inflict casualties upon the security forces.

Ulster Defence Regiment

Today, there are just 10 regular army battalions deployed as three brigades: 39 Brigade, with responsibility for the Greater Belfast area; 8 Brigade, in the north and southwest near Londonderry; and 3 Brigade, in the southeast in Armagh. Their TAOR (tactical area of responsibility) embraces 20-25% of Northern Ireland. The remainder, three-quarters of the whole, is charged to the UDR. At nine battalions, it has become the largest regiment in the British army.

A roughly 50-50 mix of full-time and part-time personnel, UDR is unique in some respects (such as manning), but is standard in most others. Created to deal with the security situation in Northern Ireland, its units perform virtually all the roles that are expected of regular battalions.

Each UDR battalion is built around a cadre of some 120 regular army officers and soldiers. All battalion commanders, for instance, are posted to their assignments from regular units (the assignment is desirable, because it is an operational command). Aside from this

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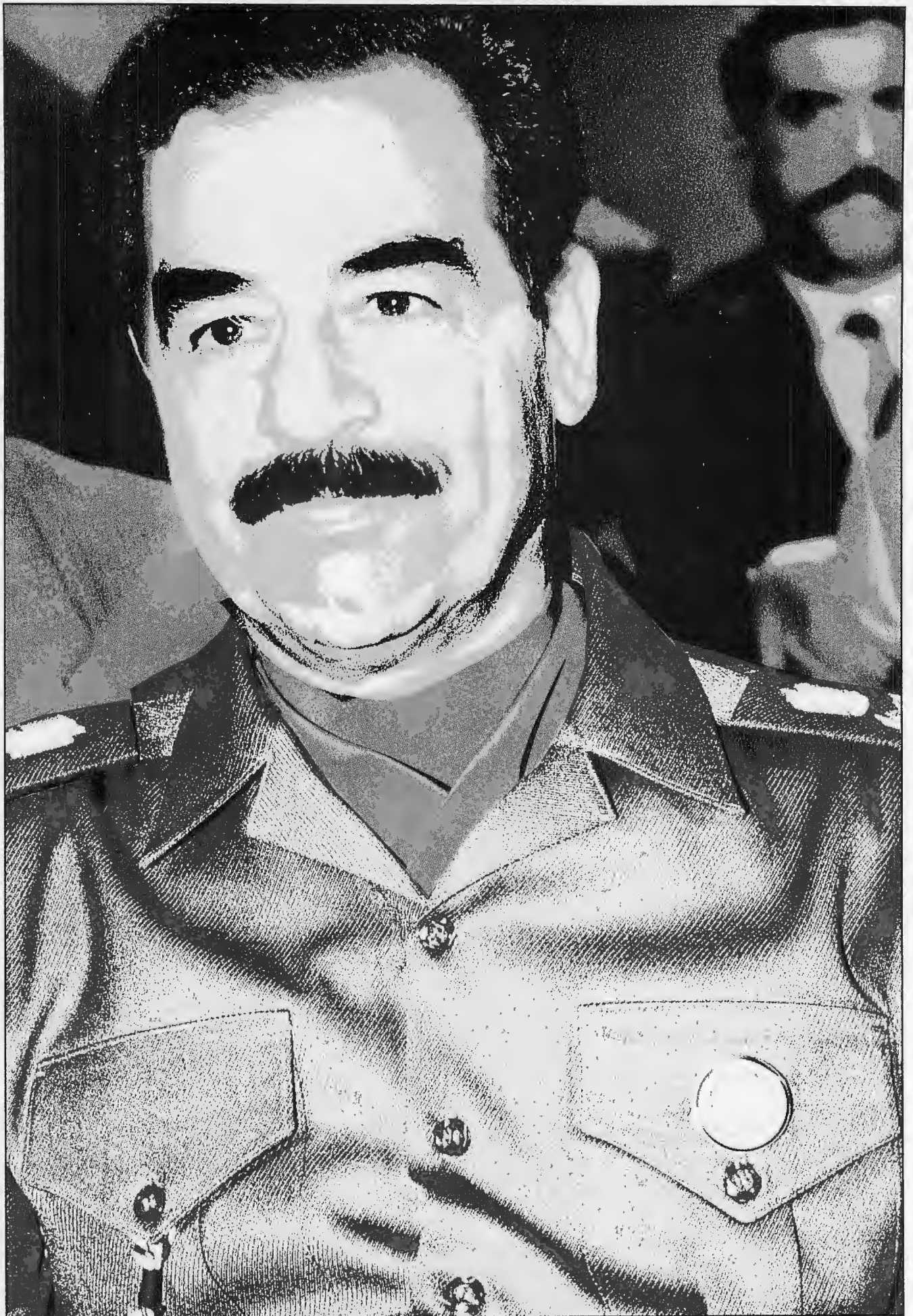


Photo: Chip Hires/Gamma Liaison

BRINGING DEATH TO TYRANTS

THE failure to aggressively target Saddam Hussein was a replay of 1989, when the United States finally decided to intervene militarily in Panama because we were too squeamish to go after Panamanian strongman General Manuel Noriega directly.

Earlier, while there was still time to avoid military action, congressional intelligence panels reportedly refused to go along with a presidential "finding" that authorized efforts to "snatch" Noriega and bring him back to the United States to stand trial for drug trafficking, or even allow the CIA to assist anti-Noriega plotters to carry out a coup d'etat that might overthrow him. If Noriega were "hurt" or killed in a coup or attempted "snatch," reasoned congressional liberals, it would have amounted to a violation of the presidentially mandated assassinations ban.

The effort to "snatch" Noriega also was opposed by a number of faint-hearted senior military commanders, despite the fact that Navy SEALs and Delta operators had run exercises in Panama for months on grabbing the Panamanian strongman. Each time, lacking a green light, they pulled up just short of their objective. "It broke my heart," one special operator reported. "There were many times when we could have done the 'dirty deed' before he knew what hit him."

Denied any effective options short of intervention, President Bush ordered Operation Just Cause to com-



mence on 20 December 1989. In the ensuing operation, 23 Americans lost their lives and 324 sustained injuries. There were 314 Panamanian soldiers killed, along with 202 civilians. Hundreds more were injured. Despite the care taken to minimize damage, when the fighting was over, large sections of Panama City lay in ruins. Most had been set on fire by Noriega's so-called "dingbats," or dignity battalions.

Just Cause was a success, but the United States had used a sledgehammer to kill a pesky fly because too many people in the Congress, the military, and even the administration found it morally, legally and politically more acceptable to invade a country than simply go after the man who was the source of the problems.

In the wake of Just Cause, CIA Director William Webster called for more latitude in interpreting the ban on assassinations. He recommended that Congress permit the CIA to assist in efforts to overthrow foreign dictators, such as Noriega, even if such efforts might inadvertently cause the individual's death. This had happened some years before when the United States provided aid to antigovernment forces in Chile who killed General Rene Schneider during a botched kidnapping attempt.

Not The American Way

"Killing," a Scottish poet once wrote, "is the ultimate simplification of life." It is an elemental act, irrevocable and final. Whether it is legal or illegal depends on the context



Can We Target One Man?

by Neil Livingstone

Photos: AP/Wide World

in which it was done, and under whose authority.

For most Americans it is a difficult issue, especially when it takes on political connotations. They are uncomfortable with the idea of assigning someone to kill another human being, with a name and a face, regardless of the fact that the individual in question is a monster or that his death might save thousands, perhaps even millions, of lives. If there must be killings, the public wants them to be antiseptic, anonymous, and at some distance. A bomb is all right, but a bullet fired at close range is immoral.

The present ban on assassination is purely voluntary. It is the product of Executive Order No. 12,333, which mandates that, "No employee of the United States government shall engage in, or conspire to engage in, assassinations." Promulgated by President Ronald Reagan, it uses the same language as Jimmy Carter's Executive Order No. 12,036.

The first president to adopt a voluntary ban on assassination was Gerald Ford. Ford's Executive Order No. 11,905 had its antecedents in Director Richard Helm's 1972 ban on assassination by employees of the CIA. At that time the CIA was reeling from charges, most unsupported, from a hysterical Congress and media, that it had engaged in a far-flung program of political assassination in places like Vietnam, the Congo and Chile.

The Ford administration applied the ban only to something called "political assassination," but Carter dropped the word "political," making the meaning of the prohibition even fuzzier than it already was. President Bush, interestingly, has not adopted his own executive order regarding assassination, but instead let it be known that he intends to be bound by the Reagan administration's executive order. There is speculation that Bush, a former CIA director, may have authorized the drafting of a new executive order, with more realistic and tightly worded language, but it has yet to be made public and is certain to set off a fire storm of controversy.

While the Hughes-Ryan amendment and a number of public laws touch on the issue of assassination, it is the prevailing Executive Order, No. 12,333, that is the source of the greatest confusion relating to the issue of assassination.

This is because none of the executive orders has defined what is meant by the term "assassination." As a result, many questions remain unanswered, and these have led to a considerable amount of confusion. If an enemy leader is targeted during wartime, for example, is that assassination? Or if U.S. commandos kill a terrorist overseas, are they violating Executive Order 12,333?

Even more fundamental, of course, is the issue of whether the United States, as a matter of national policy, should selectively target thugs and loony tunes such as Saddam Hussein, Manuel Noriega, and Muammar Khadaffi, and possibly even terrorists. Proponents argue that this makes more sense than fighting wars or conducting military operations that often result in a heavy loss of life (sometimes much of it civilian), widespread destruction, and the enormous expenditure of money that could better be used for other purposes.

The "Hitler Exception"

Many Americans believe that assassination is morally wrong and that nothing could ever justify it. Language to this effect was included in a 1976 Senate committee report, which concluded that, "Assassination has no place in America's arsenal."

But wouldn't mankind have been better off if Hitler had been eliminated rather than allowed to start a global conflagration that resulted in a hundred million deaths? This is called "humanitarian intervention" by legal scholars, and those sympathetic to this

argument believe that a legal and ethical case can be made for the deliberate targeting of another person if inaction would produce a greater evil, such as massive human rights violations.

By this standard, Saddam Hussein is a clear candidate for what was once known as "executive action." His list of crimes is long and a matter of record. In the space of a single decade, he launched wars of aggression against both Iran and Kuwait, used chemical weapons on his own Kurdish minority, reportedly butchered between 20,000 and 100,000 of his own citizens every year since coming to power, created an environmental catastrophe by setting Kuwait's oil fields ablaze and releasing a massive amount of oil in the Persian Gulf, and launched Scud missiles against Israel's civilian population, a non-belligerent in the recent conflict. He is hardly Mr. Congeniality.

Assassination In Wartime?

Many scholars argue that assassination is a peacetime term referring exclusively to the "treacherous murder" of political leaders. By contrast, during periods of conflict, the enemy's command-and-control apparatus is a legitimate military target, and therefore those officials with major command-and-control functions also are

appropriate military targets. The United States acknowledged from the outset of war that it was going after Iraq's command-and-control structure, including its top military leadership.

This was nothing new. During World War II, for example, U.S. fighters ambushed the plane carrying Japanese Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto and shot it out of the sky. It is true, however, that targeting command-and-control has more immediacy in Third World military dictatorships. In those countries, power is often concentrated in the hands of the "maximum leader," and therefore his removal often has greater impact than in countries where power is institutionalized to a larger degree.

Perhaps the most significant lesson of the recent Gulf War is that the Israelis were right. They have long maintained that the surest way to defeat an Arab nation is to destroy its command-and-control structure, since Arab military commanders demonstrate little individual initiative and once cut off from direct contact with their leaders can no longer effectively function.

Since Saddam Hussein is both field marshal and commander-in-chief of the Iraqi armed forces, there can be little argument about his prominence in Iraq's command-and-control structure. He was, therefore, a legitimate military target, and if any criticism is appropriate, it is that not enough effort was expended in targeting him and bringing the war to an even speedier, and more salutary, conclusion.

Using the same logic, it must be recognized that Libyan strongman Muammar Khadaffi was a legitimate target during the U.S. air raid on Libya in April 1986. Critics in this country argued that if Khadaffi had died in



Power is often concentrated in the hands of the "maximum leader."

LETTER OF THE LAW

The Hague Conventions of 1907, which are the basis for the law of war observed by the U.S. military, are generally interpreted as prohibiting assassination (ref. *Annex to Hague Convention No. IV, 18 October 1907*). But this "... does not ... preclude attacks on individual soldiers or officers of the enemy whether in the zone of hostilities, occupied territory, or elsewhere," according to *The Law of Land Warfare* (FM 27-10, Washington, HQ, Department of the Army, July 1956.) U.S. SpecOps personnel receive training in the law of warfare.

The U.S. military regards a person wearing a uniform of the enemy and serving in a command role as an officer of the enemy armed forces. Saddam Hussein wore Iraqi battle fatigues during the war and declared himself "ultimate commander." Make your own conclusions.

— Don McLean

the bombing of the Azzizia Barracks in Tripoli, it would have amounted to a violation of the ban. However, not only was the Azzizia Barracks a principal command-and-control center, but Khadaffi was, in effect, the commander-in-chief of the Libyan military establishment.

The National Security Council (NSC), nevertheless, worried about the assassination issue. To avoid criticism from liberals in Congress and the media, NSC staffers drafted a statement, to be issued in the event Khadaffi were killed in the attack, explaining away the dictator's death as "fortuitous." Unfortunately, the statement never had to be used.

Assassination And SpecOps

In early June, British SAS (Special Air Service) commandos opened fire on a stolen car carrying three IRA terrorists in Northern Ireland. No effort was made to arrest the men or even to issue a challenge. The car, with more than 200 bullet holes in it, crashed into a wall and a parked car, then burst into flames.

Critics charged that this was the latest in a series of more than a dozen such incidents where the SAS had engaged in what amounted to "assassination." The most famous incident was the March 1988 execution-style killing of three IRA terrorists in Gibraltar. According to the British government, the terrorists were involved in a plot to plant a car bomb in the then-British crown colony. Foreign Secretary Sir Geoffrey Howe explained the operation: "They (the IRA terrorists) made movements which led the military personnel, operating in support of the Gibraltar police, to conclude that their own lives and the lives of others were under threat. In light of this response, they were shot dead."

The SAS actions focus new attention on the use of deadly force by SpecOps forces in combating terrorism, and the rules of engagement (ROE) under which they operate. The U.S. Army, for example, is engaged in an effort to define assassination so as to make it clear that antiterrorist operations by American forces overseas are a legitimate exercise of the right of self-defense and do not constitute assassination. This effort predictably has been criticized by liberals, who claim the Army is "looking for a license to kill."

Delta Force commandos have a little ditty that goes, "Two to the body, one to the head, makes you good and dead." It's really a shooter's creed, reminding Delta operators to fire two rounds at the body of the terrorist adversary and then go for a head shot. This is necessary in case the terrorist is wearing body armor. But any terrorist hit with three rounds is, more than likely, going to be dead. Some critics have suggested that this amounts to little more than assassination and that rules of engagement should be drafted to require U.S. commandos to "use a minimum of force." This, however, would be madness, and place American hostages in unnecessary peril.

When "taking down" a plane or rescuing hostages, antiterrorist commandos know that the situation must be pacified as quickly as possible. A wounded terrorist can still return fire or toss a hand grenade, as Abu Nidal's men did aboard Pan Am flight 073, which was stormed by less-than-expert Pakistani commandos at Karachi in 1986. Twenty-one passengers were killed and more than 100



"Two to the body, one to the head, makes you good and dead."

injured in the melee. Another problem is the issue of preemption. "If someone comes to kill you," it says in the Talmud, "rise up and kill him first." Few Americans believe we should wait until attacked to respond to terrorists. Article 51 of the United Nations Charter guarantees the "inherent" right of self-defense to countries under armed attack. But the preemption of terrorist attack is tricky business, involving the interdiction, and often death, of terrorists before they actually launch their "armed attack."

The British government justified the killing of the IRA terrorists last June, in part, by stating that they "were on a mission of death" to attack Protestant workers waiting for a ride to work. The SAS ambush was, therefore, a completely appropriate preemptive response to the threat, the British government maintains.

U.S. military commanders similarly need to be able to use forcible measures to preempt or repel terrorist attacks based on the perceived threat, without worrying whether such actions might constitute assassination. The rules of engagement governing each mission, moreover, should be decided by the mission commander and his superiors, and they should be given a good deal of latitude in deciding how much force, and what kind of force, is warranted.

Conclusion

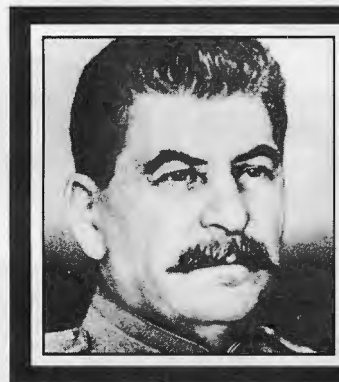
The current prohibition on assassination should be restricted to what was previously called "political" assassination, that is, the targeting of a political leader during peacetime. Even then, the president should still have the latitude to order the "selective targeting" of a leader like Saddam Hussein or Manuel Noriega, if that person's removal could reduce the necessity of military action or prevent the outbreak of war. Call it a policy of war avoidance.

The term "assassination" should be carefully defined in a new executive order by President Bush on the subject, and the killing of terrorists by U.S. military forces must specifically be exempted from any prohibitions. Terrorists should be regarded as pirates were in the past: enemies of all mankind and fair game for anyone who wants to go after them.

Indeed, Congress might even want to consider turning the problem over to the private sector by once again granting Letters of Marque and Reprisal, as provided for in the Constitution, along with generous rewards for the apprehension or death of notorious terrorists. The CIA, with appropriate oversight, should be granted greater authority to undermine and destabilize governments engaged in narcotrafficking or the sponsorship of international terrorism, even if it means that a corrupt or brutal head-of-state might meet an untimely end.

In the final analysis, a good case can be made that the selective targeting of international outlaws is a far more moral and effective response than the alternatives, and one that is more consistent with traditional American values of fair play and respect for human life. It also represents a vastly more surgical use of force, with less chance of collateral casualties, than any other option in our arsenal.

An authority in the fields of terrorism and security, Neil Livingstone is an adjunct professor at several institutions.



A wounded terrorist can still return fire or toss a hand grenade.



SOF TESTS NORINCO

COPYCAT .45 ACP

Text & Photos by Peter G. Kokalis

You'd think that by this time the 80-year-old M1911A1 .45 ACP pistol would be completely buried beneath a mountain of "wonder nines."

On the contrary, its popularity among experienced pistoleros has continued unabated. For those properly trained and permitted to carry and employ it in

"condition one" (a round in the chamber, a full 7-round magazine seated in place, the hammer fully cocked and the thumb safety engaged), this venerable single-action semiauto pistol and its cartridge remain the best choice for those who travel in harm's way armed with no more than a handgun.

Popularity of 80-year-old .45 ACP M1911A1 pistol and all its numerous copies and clones, both licensed and unlicensed, remains unabated among experienced pistoleros.

Both licensed and unlicensed copies and clones have been manufactured in the United States, Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Norway, Canada, Korea and the People's Republic of China (PRC) almost since its inception.

During the 1960s, when they were exporting the revolution, the PRC pro-



Norinco M1911A1 is a reasonably priced and, in general, faithful and reliable copy of the battle-proven Government Model .45 ACP pistol.

vided small arms and munitions to the communist-led Hukbalahap movement in the Philippines. Included were Chinese-made copies of the M14 with caliber 7.62x51mm NATO ammunition carrying a counterfeit British Radway Green headstamp ("RG 60 L2A2"). The M14 receivers were marked incorrectly, their buttstocks were of the wrong configuration and the British never manufactured small arms ammunition with copper-washed, steel cases. PRC-made .30 M1 Carbine ammunition also supplied to the Huks was headstamped "LC 52" (Lake City, 1952) and was more difficult to detect. In this time frame, a copy of the Browning-designed M1911A1 was developed.

Chinese Government Model

In slightly modified form, this latter item is currently manufactured and imported to the United States by China Sports Inc. (Dept. SOF, PO Box 3250, Ontario, CA 91761; phone 714-923-1411). It deserves close examination, as it is, in general, every bit as well-made and reliable as the Colt and priced to sell.

Both the frame and slide are high-quality, milled-steel forgings, as are those of the Colt Government Model. Most of the milling marks were removed by polishing prior to bluing. All of the steel components, with the exception of springs and the barrel, — which have been left "in-the-white" — have been salt-blued. The right side of the slide is marked "MOD. M1911A1" over "CAL. .45ACP." The left side of the slide is marked with the serial number, (as is the left side of the frame), "MADE IN CHINA BY NORINCO," and "CSI ONT CA." This latter marking is unnecessarily large on SOF's test specimen, but has been reduced in size on currently imported models.

Grip panels are fairly close replicas of the brown plastic grips found on U.S. government-issue M1911A1s, although the checkering is not as sharp.

Dimensions duplicate those of the Colt Government Model. Overall length is 8.5 inches, with a height of about 5.5 inches and a width of approximately 1.25 inches. Weight, empty, is 39 ounces. This is a heavy, service sidearm that was not designed for concealment. Barrel length is

5 inches with 6-groove rifling and a left-hand twist of one turn in 16 inches.

This pistol is a copy of the M1911A1, a modification of the original M1911 design. These alterations included an arched mainspring housing, shorter trigger, recess cuts on both sides of the frame to accommodate the trigger finger, a longer horn on the grip safety and a slightly shortened hammer spur.

With one exception, the Norinco copy remains faithful to the M1911A1 configuration with only cosmetic differences. Most U.S.-produced M1911A1s have checkered hammer spurs, thumb safeties and triggers. These components are serrated on the Norinco M1911A1. U.S.-made Government Models have either checkered or serrated slide stops. Our Norinco test specimen had a serrated slide stop. Our Norinco M1911A1 also had fine-line checkering on the magazine catch/release button while those manufactured in the United States have coarse checkering.

Original M1911A1 fixed front sights were a rounded blade swaged into the slide. That of the Norinco M1911A1 is a front-sloping ramp which is slightly higher and has a white dot at the rear. Its square-notch rear sight, set in the usual dovetail cut in the slide but of higher



Norinco M1911A1 .45 ACP pistol, field-stripped.

profile than the original M1911A1, has two white dots.

The current fetish for colored dots and bars is to be deplored, as they are usually never seen under stress and if they are, serve only to distract the shooter from concentrating on a flash front sight picture.

High And To The Right

Unfortunately, our test specimen's point of impact was, at 7 yards, 3 inches high and to the right. Lateral zero can be adjusted by tapping the rear sight to the right or left, but when a pistol with fixed sights prints high there is nothing that can be done, other than to replace the front sight with one that is higher or the rear sight with one that is lower. I have been advised that currently produced Norinco M1911A1s have both higher and wider (to

fill more of the 2.4mm-wide rear notch) front sight blades.

Colt and other U.S.-made milspec 7-round magazines for the M1911A1 have floorplates induction-welded to the body. Those of the Norinco M1911A1 are retained by two crosspins.

Method of operation remains exactly as perfected by John Moses Browning. Locked-breech, recoil-operated, the barrel and slide are locked together by two ribs on the top of the barrel at the chamber end which engage two recesses in the underside of the slide. Securely locked together during the moment of higher chamber pressure, the barrel and slide travel rearward a short distance still firmly mated to each other. During recoil, the barrel swings backward on its link, which is attached to the frame by the slide stop pin passing through it.

As rearward travel continues, the barrel is forced downward and away from the slide. The barrel's rearward travel ceases when it strikes its stop in the frame, while the slide continues backward to complete extraction and ejection of the empty case before rebounding, by means of the recoil spring, to strip and chamber another round from the magazine.

500 Rounds

SOF's test and evaluation of the Norinco M1911A1 consisted of more than 500 rounds of three different loads. China Sports imports milspec-type .45 ACP ball ammunition with a roundnose (RN) 230-grain Full Metal Jacket bullet loaded into a boxer-primed brass case (headstamped with a triangle and "90 45 AUTO.") It is non-corrosive and competitively priced.

For practice sessions I commonly fire reloads with mixed brass and a 230-grain lead alloy RN bullet propelled by 6.3 grains of Hercules Unique powder. This approximates standard military ball. Third, to test for feeding reliability, we also fired Black Hills ammunition loaded with a 185-grain Jacketed Hollow Point (JHP) bullet. (Note: for self-defense, the best load in this caliber is now the new Winchester 230-grain JHP. Moving down range at only about 835 fps, this bullet will penetrate almost 15.5 inches of soft tissue, while consistently expanding to .65 caliber. That is precisely the performance we are looking for in a large-caliber handgun projectile. See Full Auto column in this issue.)

All three of the loads fired printed 1- to 1.5-inch groups at 7 yards when fired from the Weaver position, albeit high and to the right as explained above. The Black Hills JHP bullets caused three or four failures to feed. The firing pin stop dropped downward once and initiated a major stoppage. There were no other malfunctions, but the extractor claw took a small bite out of all the cases' extractor grooves.

The firing pin spring was found to be 0.2

Continued on page 97

YUGOSLAVIA ON THE BRINK

Text & Photo by John Evans

A green Puch truck screeched to a halt. An instant later we were surrounded by members of the Slovenian Special Forces armed with Heckler & Koch MP5 submachine guns. For the 14th time that day our documents were checked at gunpoint.

After watching TV footage from Yugoslavia, Slovenia and Croatia seemed the obvious places to be. A scheduled JAT flight got me into Zagreb on 28 June. I joined up with another Brit and we both headed to Ljubljana, Slovenia's capital city, by train.

Once there, we hired a car and tried to get to the action.

Our first close call came after we stopped to photograph a road-block. For some reason this made the local police very jumpy. As we drove away their Zastava patrol car forced us off the road and we ended up staring down the business end of a pump-action shotgun until they were satisfied we weren't federal spies.

Back in the city it was chaos. It immediately became clear that all was not under control. The fear of clandestine federal activity had reached such a pitch that the Special Forces turned two Red Cross vehicles inside-out before being called off.

That night there was gunfire in the streets, and at least three people were shot dead as suspected terrorists.

At 0900 the next morning, we prepared for a press briefing. At the press center (where most of the "war stories" were actually written), I spoke to Thomas Bartol, a local student. His message was simple: "This is not a civil war, but a war against occupation by a foreign army." He described how the people in the towns and villages were all working together in the fight against a federal government trying to subdue Slovenia.

Since the press corps stayed close to the shelter, the bullshit factor soon reached dangerous levels and we decided to do something useful.

Info indicated there had been activity near Tebnje and large number of tanks at Vrhnika. Both seemed a lot more promising than killing time in Ljubljana, so we



Slovenian boy plays on Yugoslavian tank destroyed by rebels near Ljubljana. Determination of Slovenians to throw off yoke of federal rule appears genuine and widespread.

moved out toward Tebnje.

According to Jean-Pierre Gerard, a Belgian trucker we met, everything was peaceful when suddenly the jets struck. His vehicle was sprayed with the flesh of a Turk standing nearby. In a local farmhouse, three died.

It wasn't long before we ran into federal forces. Walking through their blockade we found two federal soldiers, ragged and unshaven, looting abandoned vehicles looking for food. My colleague asked for an officer and we were directed toward the armored cars. As we walked up the road, cameras held above our heads, I felt quite aware that these guys were hostile; there were no witnesses and there was no cover. Luckily, we were just told to go away — no photos and no comment.

At the other side of the column we found evidence of the air attack. It looked like about six rockets were fired against a large, static target — they all missed. On the road there were the remains of one of the dead; he was unlucky. In theory, our next destination, Vrhnika, was a straight run down the highway.

Unfortunately, tanks had been this way before and the Slovenians were determined not to let them pass again. Lengthy detours around barricades, one heavily mined, were required. We finally arrived under the guns of federal tanks on a hill overlooking the village. Except for the

tanks, it looked to be a normal, sunny Sunday.

Upon our arrival, the locals got nervous. One asked us not to take photographs near his house, and children were moved out of the firing line. On the hill, troops looked relaxed, waving to us as we cautiously approached. As we went up the hill, the locals all took cover.

An officer, accompanied by a soldier holding two grenades, came to speak to us; I noticed he refused to enter the line of sight of local forces. After friendly greetings we were directed to the local barracks 4 clicks up the road — no photos, no comment. The locals, convinced the Yugs would shoot us where we stood, were more than a bit impressed.

On the run back, we encountered local defense volunteers, civilians with arm-bands and rifles. One old guy said he would die for Slovenia; I'm afraid he might be right.

Nothing much was happening, so I headed back to Zagreb for my flight out. At the airport the next morning, things went seriously wrong. The flight was postponed, then canceled. The airport was later closed. Fighting had erupted throughout the area. A 3-mile-long federal column, including 150 tanks, was heading up from Belgrade and ground-attack aircraft were flying overhead.

On Sunday night, there was a mass for peace. During the day, 7,000 people had signed a petition asking for the return of Croatian conscripts serving in the south. This was in sharp contrast to my previous visit, when civilians shot up a federal convoy and were shot at by federal troops.

One thing you soon learn is that this is a completely unpredictable conflict.

Back in Ljubljana, the media circus is holed up in the Intercontinental Hotel getting really pissed-off because nobody is being killed. But the sight of children playing peacefully in a city I expected to be devastated brings tears to my eyes — it is one of the best days of my life.

John Edwards is a British freelance photo-journalist.

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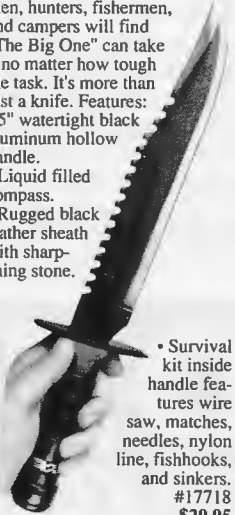
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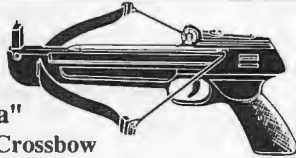
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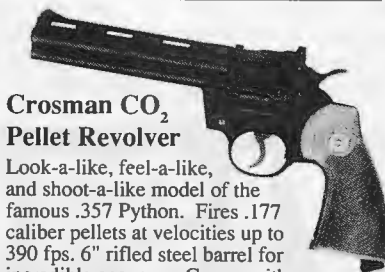
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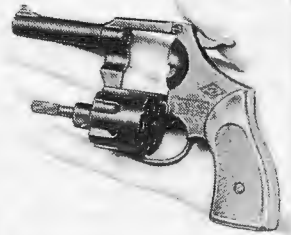
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I WAS THERE

Continued from page 16

sein's portrait, I saw Drake, an M203 gunner who had been up there the whole time. Drake was from Jamaica and spoke with a distinctive accent. He looked faintly amused by the whole scene.

"Drake, what's going on?" I asked.

"We started a damned rebellion! As soon as people heard that Americans had arrived, these guys started grabbing AKs and attacking the government troops. That's what all the fighting is about."

Several people ran over to the huge billboard of Hussein and began ripping it down with their bare hands. Others just paced frantically, chanting and muttering to themselves. I knew the crowd was emotionally on our side, but if something happened and they got mad at us, then we were outnumbered by nearly a thousand of them.

"I don't like this at all, man," Drake muttered.

Finally we received word that we were pulling out. The rebels and government troops had their own battle to fight, and we had no part of it. With mixed feelings, we boarded the trucks and left town the same way we had arrived.

We heard a lot of reports about the

fate of the rebels in Sod Ash Shuyakh. A week after we left, we heard the rebels had been attacked with chemical weapons. We heard they were also being constantly shelled, and that many non-combatants as well as rebels were being wounded.

But there was nothing we could do. The cease-fire between the government of Iraq and the Coalition forces had been called, and we had to let the citizens of Iraq fight their own internal battles. ✕

GUERRILLAS

Continued from page 59

direction. In order to make time, we trot along the top of the trenches. Every once in a while, we need to tightrope walk on small planks that serve as bridges across the trench line, or tree trunks that span rocky ravines. I'm glad I left most of my junk back in the village, or I might be fishing it out of a ditch right now.

Finally, we emerge from the jungle onto the front lines. Reinforced bunkers of dirt-covered timber and sandbags typify the architecture. A fence made from crisscrossed, sharpened bamboo spikes forms an obvious perimeter. A defoliated area on the other side of the fence separates the Karen trench line from what

appears to be another trench line down the hill about 100 meters away. You can easily pick out small bridges and bunkers down there. That's where the Burmese are.

Welcome To No-Man's-Land

The Karen lines are manned by nonsense, battle-hardened veterans covering a wide spectrum of ages. The look in their eye melts right through you. Everyone is fixated on the "killing zone" — the no-man's-land between the trenches. No one really notices this white boy running around with cameras dangling from his neck, crawling around in the mud to get good close-ups and better angles.

Every once in a while, my shots are interrupted by some of theirs — the crack of a rifle, or an exploding shell. Young boys, running around in longyis and flip-flops, are mixed in with veterans in cammies and jungle boots. There are also a whole bunch of wives out here. They follow their husbands to war and support them in combat, transporting water, food and ammo to the trenches. They smile and giggle when they see me.

Just outside of a bunker, a young troop who I refuse to believe is older than 10, sits cross-legged on the ground, a folding stock AK-47 resting on his lap. On the back of one hand, the word "Love" is tattooed.

Another young soldier with his M16 comes running up the trail, full of schoolyard smiles. He and his buddy have just trotted in from a daylight patrol. It

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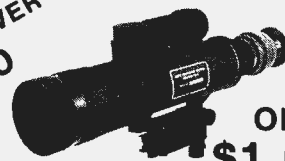
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seems to be a game for them, much as snowball fights were for me and my buddies when we were that age. We accepted the reality of getting hit in the face, whereas they accept the reality of getting shot dead, or having a leg blown off.

It's just what you're used to, I guess.

It's a cold, misty, morning when David and I leave Morpokay to go our separate ways. Our dugout canoe is waiting on the riverbank ready to ferry us back into Thailand.

The mist is thick on the river and totally surrounds our craft with white puffy clouds. As we silently paddle through this dream-like vapor, I feel like I am leaving some magical fantasy land with characters right out of comic books — warriors and poets and wizards fighting a noble rebellion against demons and evil tyrants. David is the wizard, the dungeon master who has safely led me through the mazes, around the traps and past the dragons.

When I get back to the States, it's going to be hard to decide which of the realities is more real or more relevant — theirs or ours. Civilization is going to seem all so petty.

Man, woman and child are literally fighting for their freedom in eastern Burma. Their whole existence is a mobilization of that struggle. Why does the West ignore them? What political expediency is responsible for the neglect? This is the kind of cause we are supposed

to be supporting — the cause of honorable people fighting for democratic principles against a tyrannical dictatorship. What bigger national security agenda keeps them in neglect? Why have they been ignored? I still don't get it.

I reflect on a proud, optimistic remark Bo Mya made in my interview: "Arms and ammunition are important, but most important is the spirit of the people."

Peter Boczar is a Chicago-based freelance journalist who has completed assignments in more than 20 countries. His work has appeared in The Asian Wall Street Journal, The Chicago Tribune, The Boston Herald, and other leading newspapers.

IRA

Continued from page 79

small cadre, though, UDR personnel are recruited locally. They receive standard army training, equipment, and pay and allowances. They have, in other words, joined the army, but a very particular part of the army — one that guarantees they will be deployed in defense of their own backyard.

All UDR members, in fact, live at home — there are no UDR barracks — a fact which makes them vulnerable. Of the 191 UDR soldiers who have been killed during

"the troubles," 82% have been assassinated while off duty.

In effect, what the UDR provides is the militia indispensable to a successful counterinsurgency campaign. Many, particularly among the full-timers, are former army personnel. Knowing well their home turf, they make a formidable addition to the British ranks.

Likewise, the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), the police force, is composed of locals. Grown to 8,250 personnel supported by 3,000 full-time and 1,750 part-time reservists, it is the front line against PIRA — 277 of its number have died since 1969. Among the ranks, there is little doubt but that the cost is worth the end.

"It's important that we continue on with normal existence," one senior police official commented. "The IRA says, 'The war goes on.' We must say, 'Our lives go on.' You cannot be beaten into submission. It would be an unwise society that said, 'We've had our 20 years, so we'll give in to them.'"

Innocent Victims

As the police go about their duties, they know they are targets. Yet, as in all wars, it is the populace that takes the brunt of the conflict. Since 1969, the army has lost 428 personnel; the UDR, 191; and the RUC, 277. Civilian deaths far outnumber this sum, totalling 1,963. And while the wounded for the security forces are 4,547

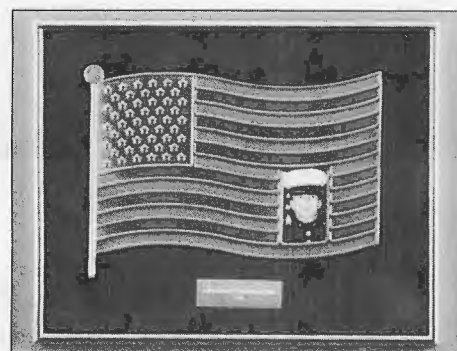
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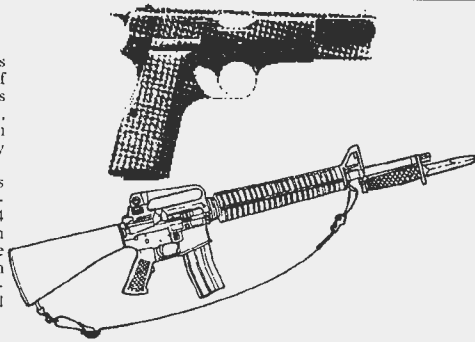
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(army), 394 (UDR), and 2,947 (RUC), 16,033 civilians are listed as having been injured. Clearly, they are on the receiving end of PIRA's campaign.

Nevertheless, such figures must be kept in perspective. Only in 1972 did deaths related to "the troubles" surpass traffic fatalities. Further, if all homicides are scaled against the size of the population, most recent figures (1986) show Northern Ireland at 7:100,000, a ratio below even that of Anchorage, Alaska, at 7.1:100,000. For comparison, Detroit and Washington, D.C., are at 60 homicides per 100,000 people. To cap off this gruesome statistical game, it may be noted that in 1990, there were 76 deaths due to the terror campaign. By contrast, 185 people died on Ulster's roads.

However, the point of terror is not simply to kill and destroy but to frighten, to disrupt normal existence. That it does in Ulster very effectively. The team I have been accompanying on patrol is ample proof of that. Security personnel are everywhere.

And what of the people? It is clear that there has been appreciable change in attitudes. "Even in the hard areas," a British army officer said, "things are changing for the better. After 20-odd years, there is a growing war weariness."

Much is made by some of the "political economy" of the conflict; that is, of the socio-economic disparities which place the Catholic community on the lower end of the pecking order. Still, the desire of the downtrodden to better themselves does not necessarily translate into support for Irish unification. And of those who do support republicanism, many appear to do so only because it is a symbol for the dream of a better status in the world. Polls and anecdotal evidence consistently show a healthy proportion of Ulster's Catholics, perhaps even a majority, see their future with Northern Ireland, not with the South.

Likewise, support for PIRA has waned as the need for a self-defense force has receded. It will always be able to get a certain amount of acceptance, but the days when it could automatically count on a mass base are over.

On the streets, of course, the task goes on. As the sun sets, the police continue to take their evidence at the machine-gun site. The boys still play, but even they appear to be growing weary. They call a few more names, then shuffle off.

Later that day, back at my hotel, I turn on the news. Further south, three Catholic young people at a "mobile store" — a lunchwagon — have been riddled with pointblank automatic weapons fire in a savage Protestant paramilitary attack. A paramilitary communique states that the murders were in retaliation for the PIRA's recent shooting of a policeman's widow (the policeman himself had earlier been assassinated by PIRA).

"According to the police," the announcer reads, face impassive, "the

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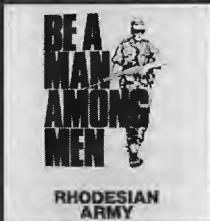
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victims were mutilated virtually beyond recognition ... ” Some weeks later, PIRA would retaliate. No doubt someone, somewhere, would hold a victory celebration.

PIRA makes much of its own deaths. Murals and impressive markers commemorate those who have fallen “in action.” Military-style funeral services are held, complete with berets and volley salutes.

It is a lie. Shorn of popular support, the PIRA terrorists press on, seeking a republican Grail from which the people no longer desire to drink.

Dr. Tom Marks, SOF's Chief Foreign Correspondent, holds a Ph.D. in Political Science.

FULL AUTO

Continued from page 22

not and as this bullet does not deform, its performance is no better than G.I. ball, albeit at much greater cost.

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is similar. The Devel bullet is a classic example of Fackler's Law — a bullet's effectiveness equals the reciprocal of its price.

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In summary, Winchester's new 230-grain JHP is clearly the best .45 ACP bullet. Hornady's 180-grain JHP XTP load surpasses all others at this time in caliber .40 S&W. Both Winchester and Fiocchi's subsonic 147-grain JHP loads are the best choice for those toting a nine mil.

Some self-proclaimed authorities have criticized the use of 10% ordnance gelatin at 4 degrees Centigrade as a substitute for autopsy reports. Yet, measurements of the bullet's penetration depth are not normally found in these reports. Recently, Eugene J. Wolberg, senior firearms criminologist at the San Diego Police Crime Laboratory, reviewed 27 shootings involving the Winchester subsonic 147-grain JHP bullet in which the bullet's penetration depth had been included in the autopsy report. Only shots into the torso that remained in the body were

included in the study. These were compared to this bullet's performance in properly prepared tissue simulant and a close correlation was found.

The widespread misinformation and lack of understanding concerning wound ballistics remains appalling. The International Wound Ballistics Association (IWBA) has been founded to identify valid literature in this field, critically review wound ballistics literature and establish an easily accessible source of wound ballistics expertise.

The IWBA is comprised of members possessing verified expertise in one or more aspects of wound ballistics and the IWBA publishes a journal, the *Wound Ballistics Review*. While its membership roster of both full members and technical consultants is limited to those actively engaged in legitimate wound ballistics research, subscriptions to the *Wound Ballistics Review* are available to all those interested in this important topic. Individual and institutional subscriptions are \$40 per year. For further information contact IWBA, Dept. SOF, 2830 D Pinole Valley Road #112, Pinole, CA 94564.

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ALAMO

Continued from page 63

still with him was Jamil. The captain found it difficult to accept their helplessness.

All day they had battled the odds. He refused to simply lie down now and wait to die. Above the bathroom door was the hatch of a small storage cupboard. Inside was a space a few feet square. It was barely enough. As he scrambled his men up into this cramped cubbyhole, Capt. Hamid had no hope that they might live. But he simply could not accept defeat. He intended to detonate his last grenade when the Iraqis discovered them, hopefully taking a few with him.

No sooner were they squashed in, than the tank fire stopped. There was a brief silence before a rash of small arms fire splattered over the outside walls as troops rushed the buildings. They heard a few defiant shots and the muffled explosion of grenades from those defending the wounded in 25. Their own house echoed with the sound of Iraqis firing into the rooms, followed by a general tumult as soldiers tramped from room to room, looting and smashing.

After what seemed an eternity, they heard voices beneath them. The captain held the grenade forward, against the hatch door. His finger clenched in the pin, his hands slippery with sweat. Beneath, there

was disagreement. Each soldier volunteered the other to climb up and check the hatch. It seemed neither wanted to be the first to stick his head through the hatch doorway. Only inches away, the four men crushed together in the pitch darkness hardly dared breathe.

After a long pause, they heard one of the Iraqis say their hatch was too obvious for a hiding place. The other concurred, and both soldiers moved on without bothering to investigate further. The men behind the hatch were engulfed with disbelief and relief.

It was not until hours after all noise had ceased that Hamid and his men decamped cautiously, with stiffened muscles, into the dark night. The house was deserted. They reconnoitered the other houses. House 25 was devoid of all life. The bodies of the wounded and their defenders lay dead and bloody on the rubble-strewn floors. They had been summarily executed. But in 24 they found only the bodies of Khalid, Abid and Hajji, who had been killed outright earlier in the conflict.

Reunion

On a hunch, Capt. Hamid softly called out the name of the man left in command of the house, the ever-resourceful Achmad. Unbelievably, the hatch above the bathroom door slowly opened to reveal four drawn faces.

Of the 20 men defending the three houses in the 12-hour battle of Algrane,

three were killed outright in the fighting. The two men defending the wounded in 25 were executed by the Iraqis, together with the seven surviving wounded. Incredibly, eight men, who refused to accept defeat, had survived.

Peter Douglas is a former Royal Marine and an experienced photojournalist. During the past several years, Douglas has been on several combat assignments for SOF, particularly in the Middle East.

GRENADE

Continued from page 35

high-pressure chamber. The burning propellant creates a pressure of probably close to 35,000 psi within the chamber, causing the brass cup to expand outward and rupture at the 12 portholes. As the portholes rupture, the gases flow into the remaining interior of the case (now a low-pressure chamber). When the gases enter the larger chamber, the pressure drops to probably no more than 4,000 psi, which is enough to propel the grenade through the M26A2's barrel and to the target. The grenade can be clearly seen on its flight to the target and in fact, almost seems to float downrange in slow motion, so I estimate the muzzle velocity to be no more than approximately 300 fps.

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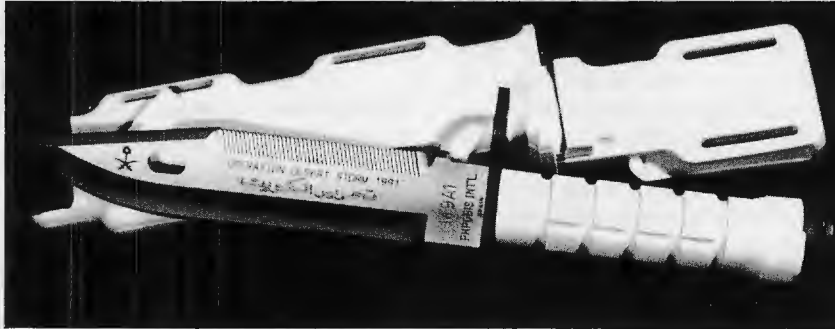
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The explosive package of the VOG-17 has been retained. Overall length of the grenade and case is 130mm with a weight of 13.4 oz. The steel grenade body contains a steel fragmentation coil with an explosive filler of 95% RDX and 5% desensitized wax. RDX is British terminology for an explosive known also as Hexogen (Cyclo-trimethylene-trinitramine). Developed in the 1930s, RDX was the acronym for "Research Department Explosive." A colorless, crystalline substance, RDX is too sensitive to be used alone in shells as it will explode at 240 degrees Centigrade and thus cannot be melted safely. The melting point is usually increased by wax so it can be press-filled into the shell.

The aluminum-alloy fuze assembly is also that of the VOG-17, although whether of the earlier or current type is unknown at this time. Initially, the grenade is spin-armed and this explains the requirement for a 16-groove barrel which probably imparts a right-hand spin of close to 40,000 rpm to the projectile. A copper rotating (or "driving") band, (commonly encountered on artillery shells) press-fit into a groove at the base of the grenade body, is the only part of the shell that touches the rifling. Securely locked to the grenade body by incisions in the groove, the rotating band is engraved into the bore's rifling grooves by the force of the propellant ignition. By following the twist of the grooves, the grenade is spun sufficiently to both stabilize its flight and arm the fuze. The fuze's self-destruct mechanism is set-back armed and has a pyrotechnic burn of 24-26 seconds.

VOG-26 rounds can be immediately distinguished by a bright blue color band around the fuze tip (although the FMLN handbook states the color code is red). The steel case is without a head stamp. However, the base of the grenade body is marked with the typical Soviet arrow, two Cyrillic letters and a two-digit number indicating probable manufacture in 1986. All fuze tips examined were stencil-marked with either "2C-A," "2G-A" or "2H-A" codes.

Throw-Away Grenade Launcher

With the above in mind, let us return to the steel chamber sleeve that turned our specimen into a one-shot throw-away grenade launcher. The steel 30x28mm case is quite substantial with a wall thickness of about 0.8mm. When converted to a high-low propulsion system it is possible that the pressure generated is no longer sufficient for complete obturation to occur. Obturation is an artillery term for the sealing of the gun breech against the undesirable leakage of propellant gases when the weapon fires. Gas wash from a 30mm shell could more than just singe your moustache when fired from the shoulder. If the VOG-26's low pressure is insufficient to push out the case wall enough to seal the chamber, it could

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be that a free-traveling obturation sleeve was designed to thrust rearward and trap any blow-by.

Inserting a new round would normally move the sleeve forward again to permit locking the barrel in battery. It doesn't take long for the high humidity of Central America to corrode steel surfaces, especially those untouched by lubrication. It could be that this obturation sleeve (if that's what it is) would no longer move freely because of rust. I have seen far worse examples of corrosion during my 16 trips to El Salvador over the last nine years.

Serial number of our test specimen was "0070." I examined two other M26A2 grenade launchers in the Airborne Battalion. They were a consecutive pair with serial numbers "8112" and "8113." The chamber sleeve on the latter specimen was also extended rearward about 1mm and frozen in that position. These serial numbers would appear to indicate serial production in excess of 8,000. No more than several dozen have been captured in El Salvador.

Our test specimen was confiscated on 14 November 1990 during an ERE raid of an FAL (*Fuerzas Armadas de Liberacion*) safe house in Los Planes de Renderos, a suburb in the high cliffs above San Salvador. Also taken were two AKMs, dynamite, assorted ammunition (7.62x39mm, 5.56x45mm, 7.62x25mm .32 ACP and 28 30mm VOG-26 grenades) and propaganda. Arrested on the premises was a 19-year-old commandante with the *nom de guerre* of "Jose." The equipment had been moved from Morazan to Chalatenango to the outskirts of San Salvador in anticipation of another FMLN offensive.

All of the M26A2 grenade launchers that I examined had whatever factory codes or other indications of origin — that were marked on the left of the receiver above the trigger — obliterated by a center punch (the most effective method as it usually precludes chemical retrieval of the marks). As a consequence, we can only speculate about the origin. Because the 30x28mm grenade has been utilized in the design, we can exclude all but a ComBloc country.

Too Crude For ComBloc

The launcher itself appears to be too crudely fabricated for any Eastern European source. That doesn't leave many other choices, especially in Central America. I surmise its origin to be Cuba, which after four decades of Marxism cannot even produce a single-shot grenade launcher that performs with acceptable reliability. However, the high-low propulsion system is a bit too complex for Fidel and I believe it was designed by his Soviet comrades. We'll probably never know for sure.

In a storage room containing captured material, I found a two-section steel

cleaning rod with a peculiar 30mm bore brush consisting of a steel-capped wooden spool with tufts of nylon bristles embedded in it. This also appeared to be of Third World origin, but duplicated the configuration of many ComBloc mortar and machine gun cleaning rods and brushes.

Information from the FMLN instruction manual indicates the effective range of the M26A2 to be 250-300 meters with a maximum range of 600 meters. Since the sights are crude, I believe the effective range to be no more than 150 meters, although grenades of this type are area target, not point target, weapons. Because the grenade body is an elongated cylinder, instead of the more common spherical shape, the fragmentation pattern is lateral in configuration. As a consequence, this grenade is significantly more effective against enemy personnel than the U.S. 40mm high-low propulsion grenade and has about three times the casualty radius of an average-sized hand grenade.

Perceived recoil of the weapon is not overly severe and hit probability at ranges less than 150 meters proved to be acceptable. We experienced one dud round which was detonated with a round of M118 Special Ball fired from a Steyr SSG at a range of 40 meters. After the forearm parted company from the barrel it was difficult to slide the barrel forward and rearward. After the steel chamber sleeve backed out, extraction became difficult and we were forced to drive the empty cases out of the chamber with a hammer and punch.

The concept of a lightweight, easy-to-maintain, relatively compact, shoulder-fired grenade launcher that propels an HE antipersonnel round out to ranges of 150 meters and beyond is appealing, especially so for low-intensity guerrilla warfare. The new Soviet 30x28mm high-low propulsion grenade is more effective than its U.S. equivalent. But, the M26A2 grenade launcher is poorly executed and is not reliable.

Even more crude in appearance than the M26A2 is a locked breech, slide-action grenade launcher captured by Salvadoran army troops in 1988. Also chambered for the 30x28mm high-low propulsion grenade, this shoulder-fired weapon weighs 13 pounds and has an overall length of 40 inches. It has a heavy, forged and mill-finished receiver with wood furniture, a rubber buttpad and twin action arms. The flip-up rear sight can be adjusted for elevation in 50-meter increments from 100-300 meters. The tubular magazine under the barrel holds two rounds. The operating mechanism is that of a conventional slide-action shotgun.

Although crudely fabricated, the complexity of the design is beyond the capabilities of the FMLN. The origin is unknown at this time. However, Cuba is, once more, a likely source. ☒



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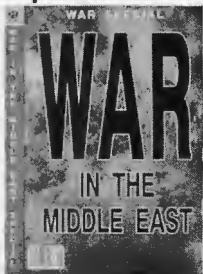
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Continued from page 85

inches shorter than milspec and this undoubtedly permitted the firing pin stop to drop downward prior to complete rebound of the striker. It was replaced with a spring of the correct length manufactured by Wolff (Dept. SOF, 3936 Miller Rd., Newtown Square, PA 19073; phone 215-359-9600). The sharp edge on the extractor claw was easily removed with a Swiss file and stone and this has been rectified on new production series pistols.

To assure reliable feeding of JHP bullets, the frame's feed ramp should be polished and the barrel "throated" by a competent pistolsmith. Trigger pull weight on our test specimen was a crisp, but slightly heavy 4.75 pounds. That's not bad, but unfortunately, the more you shoot, the more trigger-sensitive you become. I would also lighten the trigger pull weight to about 3.5 pounds. No other modifications are required and for most, its performance out-of-the-box, as now manufactured, will suffice.

For something less than 400 bucks you can buy a Norinco M1911A1 complete with two magazines, a cleaning rod with bristle bore brush, slotted-tip rod and a surprisingly well-written instruction manual. One of your alternatives is to spend about \$200 more for a Colt Series 80. That will include their despised firing pin safety, a plastic mainspring housing and trigger and a pistol that needs several hundred dollars worth of tuning. You decide. ✂

EXODUS

Continued from page 53

been catching up on my Z's, the Kurds had sent a party down the road to check out the enemy position. The Iraqis had moved a heavy machine gun into place. More disturbing, the recon party thought they'd heard tracked vehicles. With RPGs, which they had, the Kurds could probably have held that gorge against tanks for an hour or so, maybe more, but by this time there was no one at our rear to hold it for. It was time to go.

Retreating From Front To Front

As we packed up and started moving, the Iraqis showed us how their machine gun worked. Once again, no one was hit, but it gave us encouragement to move. For the next several hours, we would retreat a little, until someone decided that where we stood was now the new front. Then the Iraqis would move up and we'd pull back some more. By 0500 we reached a crossroads where a few pickups were waiting. They agreed to take all the journalists about 20 minutes up the road to

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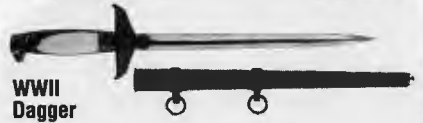
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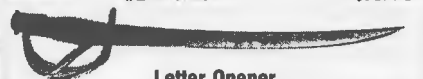
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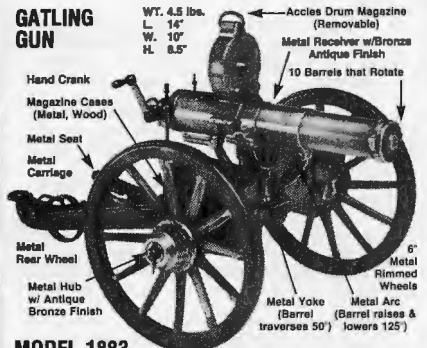
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the town of Sarsink. From there we hoped to figure out what had happened to the Kurdish Resistance in the last 36 hours. We got to Sarsink at dawn and went to sleep on the floor of an abandoned office building.

I woke up in mid-morning and went looking for information. Where were Talabani and Barzani? Was there an organized front anywhere? Had Zakhu fallen? All anyone seemed to know was that Saddam's army had hit Dahuk with tanks and helicopter gunships (in defiance of the American ban on Iraqi warplanes) and that now they weren't far away, maybe a couple of hours. I went inside to wake up K and the others we'd crossed the border with. It was Monday, April Fool's Day.

We had no transport. The pickups in which we'd arrived had left after dropping us off. The four of us headed out on foot, joining what had become an apparently endless stream of refugees. People were in every imaginable kind of conveyance: dumptrucks, mule-drawn carts, wheelbarrows, you name it. We saw people fighting to get into the back of a garbage truck. The shortage of fuel was as critical as the shortage of vehicles. One guy was pouring kerosene into the tank of a late-model Mercedes. Anything to get a few more miles up the road. At the edge of town we got a lift for a mile or so with a man and his father in a Toyota sedan, but they weren't going far. They were driving up and down the road looking for family members. The old man wept uncontrollably.

After an hour of walking, a truck full of Peshmerga came by and offered us a lift. Before they reached us they must have passed thousands of their own people, but as soon as they saw foreigners, they pulled over. You might say they have a thing about hospitality. We climbed on board. The Peshmerga were headed for Al Amadiyah, the last good sized town before the Turkish and Iranian borders. There was going to be some attempt at a final stand. As we drove along, K and I counted the people walking along the road. We passed about 200 a minute for hours, then there were too many to count. By day's end, I estimate we saw a quarter of a million refugees.

In Al Amadiyah, we went looking for the Peshmerga commander, hoping he could find us further transport. He was in an office on the second floor of the town hall, now taken over by the rebels. The streets were full of refugees. Men with weapons were aimlessly milling about everywhere. Clearly, no one was really in control of the city, but we tried the commander anyway. He said he'd see what he could do, but made no promises.

Someone Must Pay

While we were waiting to see what that would amount to, first one, then another heavy truck pulled up to the town hall. Immediately, the crowd in the street

started yelling. The trucks were both full of men with blindfolds and their hands tied behind their backs. They were Iraqi secret police (or people unfortunate enough to be mistaken for them) who'd been captured by the Kurds. By this time nearly everyone knew that there was no hope of resisting the Iraqi government's advance on Kurdistan, and everyone feared the worst once Saddam's forces arrived. Before that happened, however, someone was going to pay. "Someone" as in the 82 prisoners on those trucks.

Revolution in general, and in the Middle East in particular, is a hard ball game. If you lose, you lose it all. We climbed up on the roofs of the trucks to get a better look in back. Even in open air, the smell was horrific. It was a combination of piss, shit, vomit, sweat and blood; everything that could come out of a human body was coming out of these guys. Wherever they'd been confined, there had obviously been no water for bathing.

The crowd pressed in on the trucks, screaming for blood. The blindfolded prisoners were white with fear. The trucks pulled out; they were going to take a victory lap before depositing their passengers at a local prison. We made a circle, all around the town, everywhere surrounded by howling crowds of Kurdish refugees or soon-to-be refugees. The 82 prisoners were concrete symbols of their boss, Saddam Hussein, the man who'd used poison gas against Kurdish women and children in 1988, killing thousands. They were concrete symbols of the sinister force once again stalking the Kurds (and us).

At the prison, the men were unloaded one by one, still blindfolded, mostly barefoot, and led up steps strewn with broken glass and into the jail. Some were weeping, some pleaded for mercy, but most of them just kept silent and allowed themselves to be dragged inside the building they'd never leave alive.

This was the same building where some of them had probably taken other people, the same building where some of their Kurdish captors might in turn be taken only a few hours later. I asked a man standing at the door of the prison what would happen to the prisoners. "They will be tried and then," he added, smiling, "they will be punished!"

Patrick O'Donnell is an experienced combat reporter who can be found wherever there are hot spots in the world. Last we heard he was on his way to Yugoslavia.

INSIDE THE IRA

Continued from page 73

warnings rather than panic commuters over what they thought may have been a

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hoax. The British also put noncombatants in harm's way by building barracks in the midst of civilian housing, using locals as human shields.

Cars are hijacked for transport to the site of an attack, to carry a bomb, or to be used as a scout car equipped with a police scanner in advance of an assault vehicle. Members wear masks if an attack will take place in a situation where identification could result. Otherwise, boiler suits and gloves are worn and cars are burned afterwards to destroy evidence.

Escape routes are well-planned and IRA members usually get away, despite saturation of an area by British Security Forces immediately after an attack. The IRA is more cautious than any other guerrilla organization about risking the lives of its members, thus deterring its effectiveness.

But it does push that ethic to its limits, and has boldly penetrated the tightest security. In September 1990, IRA members set up a roadblock at Killeen on the South Armagh border within full view of two army watchtowers and removed a leading detective of the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) from a van. They calmly marched him away and he was later executed.

Ambushes in cities are staged by taking over houses and holding occupants prisoner until British soldiers pass. They warn civilians to avoid being near soldiers lest they be caught up in an attack.

As many as 80% of IRA operations have been abandoned because of danger to non-targets (25% of IRA victims have been noncombatants, as compared with 55% for British forces and 90% for loyalist paramilitaries). The IRA does not engage in random tit-for-tat killings of ordinary Protestants in retaliation for loyalist attacks on Catholics.

Targets And Tactics

Targets change at the direction of the Army Council. In 1985, a campaign of leveling barracks and intimidating contractors who tried to rebuild them was initiated. The Dublin-Belfast railway has been frequently disrupted in the last two years in order to draw soldiers out of barracks to deal with the bombs. With barracks, soldiers, and transport so heavily armored in the North, the IRA has taken to attacking the British army elsewhere, where it is more vulnerable. Engaging the Irish Republic's Security Forces is forbidden.

Tactics often show great skill, but sometimes are strategically stupid. Assassinating Margaret Thatcher may have been popular, even with some in Britain; assassinating John Major during his honeymoon period at the height of British patriotic fervor over the Gulf War, however, would have been unwise.

IRA operations rely on its intelligence apparatus, the impressive track record of which is the result of information gathered



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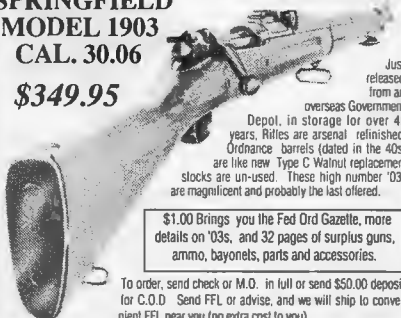
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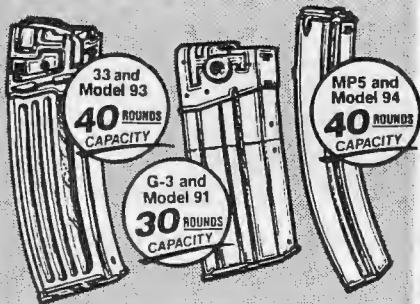
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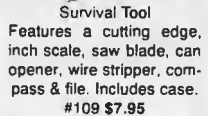
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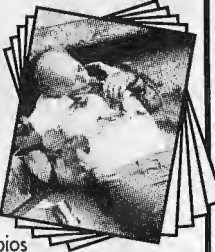
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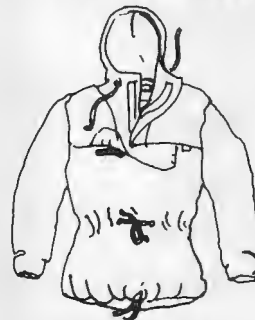
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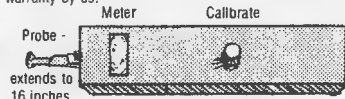
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 9. Heckler & Koch HK-91, H-93, HK-94 and PSG-1
 10. MAC 10 and MAC 11
 11. SKS with detachable magazine
 12. SIG AMT, SIG 500 Series, and SIG PE-57
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 14. Sterling MK-6 and SAR
 15. Steyr AUG
 16. Valmet M62, M71S and M78
 17. ArmaLite AR-180 Carbine
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 19. Calico M-900 Assault Carbine
 20. Mandall THE-TAC-1 Carbine
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 22. PJK M-68 Carbine
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definitely say the United States-based Irish Northern Aid organization has never provided the IRA with any funding. The real answer to financing is: The IRA is cheap to run. It has most of the arms it needs for the foreseeable future and is only paying operational expenses of volunteers at the moment. There are no "godfathers" living richly off the hauls of subordinates.

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Continued on page 112

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territory's residents when it was negotiated in 1985.

A secret agreement between the British government and Ulster loyalists in 1921 ruled out any return of the six counties to the Irish Republic, even if a majority there wanted this. To make the latter unlikely, Catholics were denied the right to vote, were refused employment by Protestant business owners, and were burned out of their homes in an attempt to drive them out of the province.

Republicans would argue that the legitimate majority that should be respected is that of the whole island. Others think it is absurd that 960,000 Ulster Protestants can veto the wishes of a majority of the 55 million citizens of the U.K. who unwillingly foot the war bill.

The issue is not the simple one the British government portrays when it positions itself in favor of "democracy" (which means keeping Northern Ireland in the United Kingdom). The real question is whether Ulster's loyalists have anything to fear from reunification of the island, which would justify the war.

Protestants living in the Republic now would say no. The one serious gripe, the ban on divorce, should be taken care of next year. An end to the war would boost tourism and investment in the North as well as encourage international aid. The equivalent of U.S. \$5 billion Britain annually spends to hold onto Northeast Ireland could cushion the transition.

Recent studies show economies on both sides of the border would enjoy a long-term benefit from an end to partition. With no real grievances in a reunited Ireland, the Northern Protestant backlash should quickly wither. The current resistance is the result of centuries of manipulation by British governments, who have used the Ulster loyalists as their imperial front line.

It can be argued that Irish Republicans have no better reasons to want reunification than Britons and Ulster Protestants have to resist it. But nationalism is an eighth century tradition with millions of martyrs and there is no way that long shadow will allow the IRA to lay down its arms.

The pragmatic person will look to moving the other parties first and ignore

the perennial rumors of an IRA cease-fire. Irish Republicans are fond of quoting Patrick Pearse, leader of the 1916 Easter Rising: "Ireland un-free shall never be at peace."

Scott S. Smith is a Los Angeles-based freelance journalist of British and Ulster Protestant heritage who has specialized in the war in Northern Ireland for the past three years.

NICARAGUA

Continued from page 43

because he wants to live in Nicaragua, but he comes with his little rifle. Who gave it to him? I don't know if it was the United States, the Soviet Union — who knows? It is because of the war that he goes with his rifle.

A law is being passed so that he who goes with his rifle may have a license to go with his rifle. Yes, it is permitted to kill a deer, a tiger, or a lion. But it is not permitted to kill people. Here I don't permit war. I want peace and tranquility. Here, not only the Resistance, the recontras as you might refer to them, are armed, but so are the Sandinistas. But there are less weapons in their hands now than before.

Each rifle that has been found has been taken away. The Ministry of Government Affairs has his representative. If you say that in such a place there are weapons, he goes to that place, takes them away and destroys them immediately. I believe in this country. If all of these weapons could be with me I would find a place to bury them.

Salisbury: Then you don't see the war resurging?

Chamorro: No, señor. No, no. Look, who is going to support it, if nowhere in the world there is support for war? Do you believe that the Soviet Union is going to support a war? Do you believe that the United States is going to support a war? Do you believe that Spain (which has police advisers in Nicaragua) is going to support a war?

Don't wait for that. And who is going to support a war here in Nicaragua if the country is bankrupt? A war costs a lot of money. That money that was spent (in the recent war) was tragic because of an ideology (Marxism). But, thank God, the war is over now.

Salisbury: What happens if those people who still go armed commit war actions again? How will you react?

Chamorro: He who commits war actions at this moment — you file a complaint and take him prisoner and take away his weapon.

Salisbury: But could you mobilize the Sandinista army to react against them?

Chamorro: The one that has to be mobilized is the Ministry of Affairs (which the National Police are part of). The Ministry of Government Affairs is in charge of looking after the security of the country.

Salisbury: Your late husband, Pedro Joaquin, was assassinated during the Somoza dictatorship. He wrote in his newspaper very passionately about the necessity of justice in the establishment of democracy. There were atrocities committed by both sides in the war — Sandinistas and contras. You decreed an amnesty for the belligerents. But families that have been victims of war crimes do not agree that these crimes should remain unpunished and they demand justice. Do you foresee a day when trials for war crimes — similar to those that occurred in Argentina — will be opened?

Chamorro: Look, I wish to say something to you. I, as a Catholic and Christian, ordered a decree of pardon through the national assembly when I became president of the Republic, because I don't believe in either Sandinista justice, nor Somocista justice. I acted correctly. I wish everyone had these thoughts. Here we don't have the death penalty. For that there is judicial power. For that, there is legislative power, so that they may do it with laws, that they may comply with the laws.

Steve Salisbury, SOF's Senior Foreign Correspondent, has lived and worked in Central America for more than a decade.

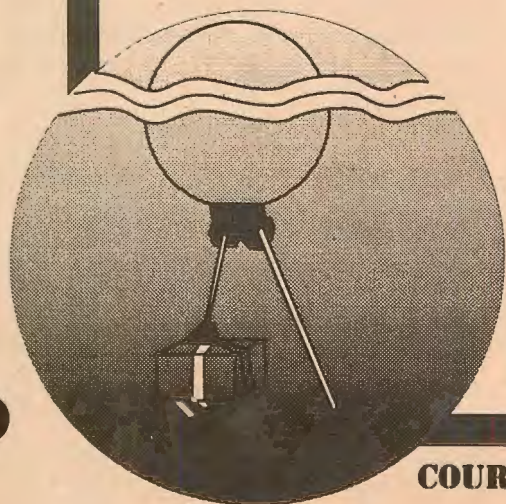


U.S. ARMY SPECIAL FORCES CACHING TECHNIQUES

**U.S. ARMY
JOHN F. KENNEDY
SPECIAL WARFARE CENTER**

CACHING

Caching is the process of hiding equipment or materials in a secure storage place with the view to future recovery for operational use. The ultimate success of caching may well depend upon attention to detail, that is, professional competence that may seem of minor importance to the untrained eye. Security factors, such as cover for the caching party, sterility of the items cached, and removal of even the slightest trace of the caching operation are vital. Highly important, too, are the technical factors that govern the preservation of the items in usable condition and the recording of data essential for recovery. Successful caching entails careful adherence to the basic principles of clandestine operations, as well as familiarity with the technicalities of caching.



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Section I. Caching Considerations

Caching considerations that are vital to the success of the caching operation may be done in a variety of operational situations. For example, cached supplies can meet the emergency needs of personnel who may be barred from their normal supply sources by sudden developments or who may need travel documents and extra funds for quick escape. Caching can help solve the supply problems of long-term operations conducted far from a secure base.

Caching also can provide for anticipated needs of wartime operations in areas likely to be overrun by the enemy.

PLANNING FOR A CACHING OPERATION

Caching involves selecting items to be cached, procuring those items, and selecting a cache site. Selection of the items to be cached requires a close estimate of what will be needed by particular units for particular operations. Procurement of the items usually presents no special problems. In fact, the relative ease of procurement before an emergency arises is one of the prime considerations in favor of caching. When selecting a cache site, planners should always ensure that the site is accessible not only for emplacement, but also for recovery. When planning a caching operation, the planner must consider seven basic factors.

Purpose and Contents of the Cache

Planners must determine the purpose and contents of each cache because these basic factors influence the location of the cache, as well as the method of hiding. For instance, small barter items can be cached at any accessible and secure site because they can be concealed easily on the person once recovered. However, it would be difficult to conceal rifles for a guerrilla band once recovered. Therefore, this site must be in an isolated area where the band can establish at least temporary control. Certain items, such as medical stock, have limited shelf life and require rotation periodically or special storage considerations, necessitating easy access to service these items. Sometimes it is impossible to locate a cache in the most convenient place for an intended user. Planners must compromise between logistical objectives and actual possibilities when selecting a cache site. Security is always the overriding consideration.

Anticipated Enemy Action

In planning the caching operation, planners must consider the capabilities of any intelligence or security services not participating in the operation. They should also consider the potential hazards the enemy and its witting or unwitting accomplices present. If caching is done for wartime operational purposes, its ultimate success will depend largely on whether the planners anticipate the various obstacles to recovery, which the enemy and its accomplices will create if the enemy occupies the area. What are the possibilities that the enemy will preempt an ideal site for one reason or another and deny access to it? A vacant field surrounded by brush may seem ideal for a particular cache because it is near several highways. But such a location may also invite the enemy to locate an ordnance depot where the cache is buried.

Activities of the Local Population

Probably more dangerous than deliberate enemy action are all of the chance circumstances that may result in the discovery of the cache. Normal activity, such as construction of a new building, may uncover the cache site or impede access to it. Bad luck cannot be anticipated, but it can probably be avoided by careful and imaginative observation of the prospective cache site and of the people who live near the site. If the cache is intended for wartime use, the planners must project how the residents will react to the pressures of war and conquest. For example, one of the more likely reactions is that many residents may resort to caching to avoid having their personal funds and valuables seized by the enemy. If caching becomes popular, any likely cache site will receive more than normal attention.

Intended Actions by Allied Forces

Using one cache site for several clandestine operations involves a risk of mutual compromise. Therefore, some planners should rule out otherwise suitable caching sites if they have been selected for other clandestine purposes, such as drops or safe houses. A site should not be located where it may be destroyed or rendered inaccessible by bombing or other allied military action, should the area be occupied by the enemy. For example, installations likely to be objects of special protective efforts by the occupying enemy are certain to be inaccessible to the ordinary citizen. Therefore, if the cache is intended for wartime use, the caching party should avoid areas such as those near key bridges, railroad intersections, power plants, and munitions factories.

Packaging and Transportation Assets

Planners should assess the security needs and all of the potential obstacles and hazards that a prospective cache site can present. They should also consider whether the operational assets of the organization are sufficient to overcome those obstacles and hazards security. Planners must consider the assets that could be used for packaging and transporting the package to the site. Best results are obtained when the packaging is done by experts at a packaging center. The first question, therefore, is to decide whether the package can be transported from the headquarters or the field packaging center to the cache site securely and soon enough to meet the operational schedules. If not, the packaging must be done locally, perhaps in a safe house located within a few miles of the cache site. If such an arrangement is necessary, the choice of cache sites may be restricted by limited safe house possibilities.

Personnel Assets

All who participate directly in emplacement will know where the cache is located. Therefore, only the fewest possible and the most reliable persons should be used. Planners must consider the distance from the person's residence to the prospective cache site and what

action cover is required for the trip. Sometimes transportation and cover difficulties require the cache site to be within a limited distance of the persons' residence. The above considerations also apply to the recovery personnel.

Caching Methods

Which cache method to use depends on the situation. It is therefore unsound to lay down any general rules, with one exception. Planners should always think in terms of suitability, for example, the method most suitable for each cache, considering its specific purpose; the actual situation in the particular locality; and the changes that may occur if the enemy gains control.

Concealment. Concealment requires the use of permanent man-made or natural features to hide or disguise the cache. It has several advantages. Both emplacement and recovery usually can be done with minimum time and labor, and cached items concealed inside a building or dry cave are protected from the elements. Thus, they require less elaborate packaging. Also, in some cases, a concealed cache can be readily inspected from time to time to ensure that it is still usable. However, there is always the chance of accidental discovery in addition to all the hazards of wartime that may result in discovery or destruction of a concealed cache or denial of access to the site. The concealment method, therefore, is most suitable in cases where an exceptionally secure site is available or where a need for quick access to the cache justifies a calculated sacrifice in security. Concealment may range from securing small gold coins under a tile in the floor to walling up artillery in caves.

Burial. Adequate burial sites can be found almost anywhere. Once in place, a properly buried cache is generally the best way of achieving lasting security. In contrast to concealment, however, burial in the ground is a laborious and time-consuming method of caching. The disadvantages of burial are that —

- Burial almost always requires a high-quality container or special wrapping to protect the cache from moisture, chemicals and bacteria in the soil.
- Emplacement or recovery of a buried cache usually takes so long that the operation must be done after dark unless the site is exceptionally secluded.
- It is especially difficult to identify and locate a buried cache.

Submersion. Submersion sites that are suitable for secure concealment of a submerged cache are few and far between. Also, the container of a submerged cache must meet such high technical standards for waterproofing and resistance to external pressure that the use of field expedients is seldom workable. To ensure that a submerged cache remains dry and in place, planners must determine not only the depth of the water, but the type of bottom, the currents, and other facts that are relatively difficult for nonspecialists to obtain. Emplacement, likewise requires a high degree of skill. At least two persons are needed for both emplacement and recovery. Especially when a heavy package is involved, recovery is often more difficult than emplacement and requires additional equipment. In view of the difficulties — especially the difficulty of recovery — the submersion method is suitable only on rare occasions. The most noteworthy usage is the relatively rare maritime resupply operation where it is impossible to deliver supplies directly to a reception committee. Caching supplies offshore by submersion is often preferable to sending a landing party ashore to bury a cache.

SELECTION OF THE SITE

The most careful estimates of future operational conditions cannot ensure that a cache will be accessible when it is needed. However, criteria for a site selection can be met when three questions are answered.

Criteria for Site Selection

Can the site be located by simple instructions that are unmistakably clear to someone who has never visited the location? A site may be ideal in every respect, but if it has no distinct, permanent landmarks within a readily measurable distance it must be ruled out.

Are there at least two secure routes to and from the site? Both primary and alternate routes should provide natural concealment so that the emplacement party and the recovery party can visit the site without being seen by anyone normally in the vicinity. An alternate escape route offers hope of avoiding detection and capture in an emergency.

Can the cache be emplaced and recovered at the chosen site in all seasons? Snow and frozen ground create special problems. Snow on the ground is a hazard because it is impossible to erase a trail in the snow. Planners must consider whether seasonal changes in the foliage will leave the site and the routes dangerously exposed.

The Map Survey

Finding a cache site is often difficult. Usually, a thorough systematic survey of the general area designated for the cache is required. The survey is best done with as large-scale a map of the area as is available. By scrutinizing the map, the planners can determine whether a particular sector must be ruled out because of its nearness to factories, homes, busy thoroughfares, or probable military targets in wartime. A good military-type map will show the positive features in the topography: proximity to adequate roads or trails, natural concealment (for example, surrounding woods or groves), and adequate drainage. A map also will show the natural and man-made features in the landscape. It will provide the indispensable reference points for locating a cache site: confluences of streams, dams and waterfalls, road junctures and distance markers, villages, bridges, churches, and cemeteries.

The Personal Reconnaissance

A map survey normally should show the location of several promising sites within the general area designated for the cache. To select and pinpoint the best site, however, a well-qualified observer must examine each site firsthand. If possible, whoever examines the site should carry adequate maps, a compass, a drawing pad or board for making sketch maps or tracings, and a metallic measuring line. (A wire knotted at regular intervals is adequate for measuring. Twine or cloth measuring tapes should not be used because stretching or shrinking will make them inaccurate if they get wet.) The observer should also carry a probe rod for probing prospective burial sites, if the rod can

be carried securely.

Since the observer seldom completes a field survey without being noticed by local residents, his action cover is of great importance. His cover must offer a natural explanation for his exploratory activity in the area. Ordinarily, this means that an observer who is not a known resident of the area can pose as a tourist or a newcomer with some reason for visiting the area. However, his action cover must be developed over an extended period before he undertakes the actual reconnaissance. If the observer is a known resident of the area, he cannot suddenly take up hunting, fishing, or wildlife photography without arousing interest and perhaps suspicion. But he must build up a reputation for being a devotee of his sport or hobby.

Reference Points

When the observer finds a suitable cache site, he prepares simple and unmistakable instructions for locating the reference points. These instructions must identify the *general area* (the names of generally recognizable places, from the country down to the nearest village) and an *immediate reference point*. Any durable landmark that is identified by its title or simple description can be the immediate reference point (for example, the only Roman Catholic church in a certain village or the only bridge on a named road between two villages). The instructions must also include a *final reference point (FRP)*, which must meet four requirements:

- It must be identifiable, including at least one feature than can be used as a precise reference point.

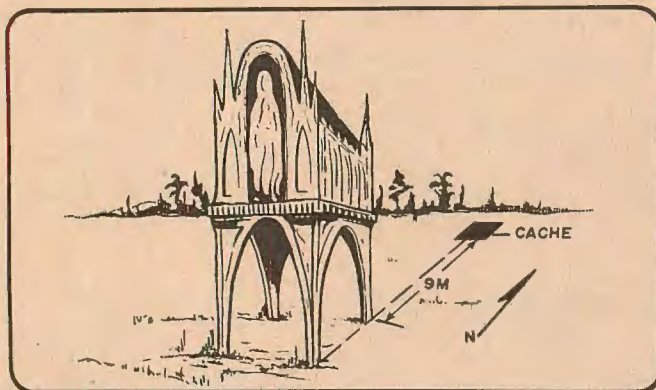


Figure 5-1. A cache located directly beside the FRP. Cache is located adjacent to southwest corner of church on south side.



Figure 5-2. A cache located a measured distance along a sighted line. Cache is located 9 meters north in line with east side of shrine.

- It must be an object that will remain fixed as long as the cache may be used.
- It must be near enough to the cache to pinpoint the exact location of the cache by precise linear measurements from the FRP to the cache.
- It should be related to the immediate reference point by a simple route description, which proceeds from the immediate reference point to the FRP.

Since the route description should be reduced to the minimum essential, the ideal solution for locating the cache is to combine the immediate reference point and the FRP into one landmark readily identifiable, but sufficiently secluded. The following objects, when available, are sometimes ideal reference points: small, unfrequented bridges, and dams, boundary markers, kilometer markers and culverts along unfrequented roads, a geodetic survey marker, battle monuments, and wayside shrines. When such reference points are not available at an otherwise suitable cache site, natural or man-made objects may serve as FRPs: distinct rocks, posts for power or telephone lines, intersections in stone fences or hedgerows, and gravestones in isolated cemeteries.

Pinpointing Techniques

Recovery instructions must identify the exact location of the cache. These instructions must describe the point where the cache is placed in terms that relate it to the FRP. When the concealment method is used, the cache ordinarily is placed inside the FRP, so it is pinpointed by a precise description of the FRP. A submerged cache usually is pinpointed by describing exactly how the moorings are attached to the FRP. With a buried cache, any of the following techniques may be used.

Placing the cache directly beside the FRP. The simplest method is to place the cache directly beside the FRP. Then pinpointing is reduced to specifying the precise reference point of the FRP. (Figure 5-1).

Sighting the cache by projection. This method may be used if the FRP has one flat side long enough to permit precise sighting by projecting a line along the side of the object. The burial party places the cache a measured distance along the sighted line (Figure 5-2). This method may also be used if two precise FRPs are available, by projecting a line sighted between the two objects. In either case, the instructions for finding the cache must state the approximate direction of the cache from the FRP. Since small errors in sighting are magnified as the sighted line is extended, the cache should be placed as close to the FRP as other factors permit. Ordinarily this method becomes unreliable if the sighted line is extended beyond 50 meters.

Placing the cache at the intersection of measured lines. If two FRPs are available within several paces, the cache can be one line projected from each of the FRPs (Figure 5-3). If this method is used, state the approximate direction of the cache from each FRP. To ensure accuracy, neither of the projected lines (from the FRPs to the point of emplacement) should be more than twice as long as the base line (between the two FRPs). If this proportion is maintained, the only limitation upon the length of the projected lines is the length of the measuring line that the recovery party is expected to carry. The recovery party should carry two measuring lines when this method is used.

Sighting the cache by compass azimuth. If the above methods of sighting are not feasible, one measured line may be projected by

taking a compass azimuth from the FRP to the point where the cache is placed (Figure 5-4). To avoid confusion, use an azimuth to a cardinal point of the compass (north, east, south or west). Since compass sightings are likely to be inaccurate, a cache that is pinpointed by this method should not be placed more than 10 meters from the FRP.

Figure 5-5 explains how sighting by a compass azimuth can be combined with placing the cache at the intersection of measured lines when only one FRP is available, but a multiple cache is required. (A multiple cache is usually employed for communications equipment.) Whenever possible, use several FRPs for pinpointing a multiple cache.

Measuring Distances

The observer should express all measured distances in a linear system that the recovery party is sure to understand — ordinarily the standard system for the country where the cache is located. He should use whole numbers (6 meters, not 6.3 or 6.5) to keep his instructions as brief and as simple as possible. To get an exact location for the cache in whole numbers, take sightings and measurements first.

If the surface of the ground between the points to be measured is uneven, the linear distance should be measured on a direct line from point to point, rather than by following the contour of the ground. This method requires a measuring line long enough to reach the full distance from point to point and strong enough to be pulled taut without breaking.

Marking Techniques

The emplacement operation can be simplified and critical time saved if the point where the cache is to be buried is marked during the reconnaissance.

If a night burial is planned, the point of emplacement may have to be marked during a daylight reconnaissance. This method should be used whenever operational conditions permit.

The marker must be an object that is easily recognizable but that is meaningless to an unwitting observer. For example, a small rock or a branch with its butt placed at the point selected for the emplacement may be used.

Additional Data Required for Emplacement

During a personal reconnaissance, the observer must not only pinpoint the cache site, but also gather all the incidental information required for planning the emplacement operation. It is especially important to determine the best route to the site and at least one alternate route, the security hazards along these routes, and any information that can be used to overcome the hazards.

Since this information is also essential to the recovery operation, it must be compiled after emplacement and included in the final cache report. Therefore, the observer should be thoroughly familiar with the *Twelve-Point Cache Report* before he starts a personal reconnaissance. This report is a checklist for the observer to record as much information as possible. Points 6 through 9 and 11 are particularly important. The personal reconnaissance also provides an excellent opportunity for a preliminary estimate of the time required for getting to the site.

THE ALTERNATE SITE

As a general rule, planners should select an alternate site in case unforeseen difficulties prevent use of the best site. Unless the primary site is in a completely deserted area, there is always some danger that the emplacement party will find it occupied as they approach, or that the party will be observed as they near the site. The alternate site should be far enough away to be screened from view from the primary site, but near enough so that the party can reach it without making a second trip.

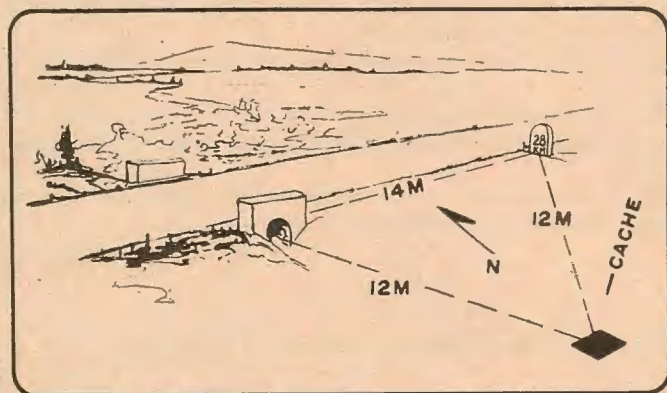


Figure 5-3

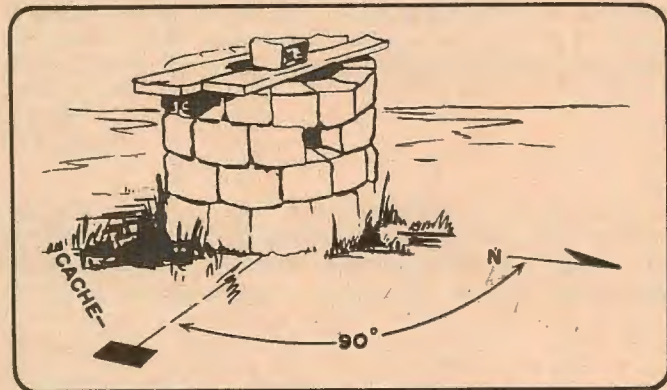


Figure 5-4

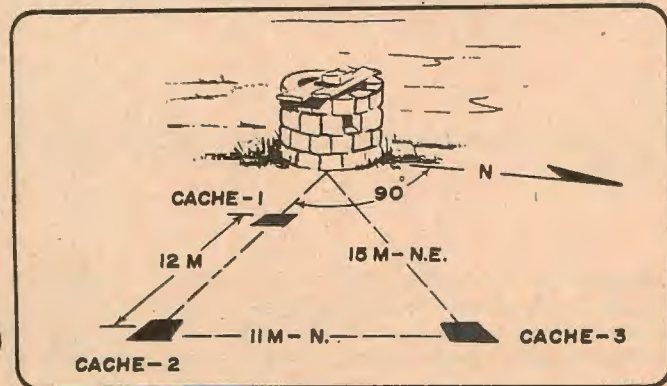


Figure 5-5

Figure 5-3. A cache located at the intersection of measured lines. Cache is located 12 meters southwest of kilometer stone 28, 12 meters southeast from center of south end of culvert and 14 meters west of kilometer stone 28.

Figure 5-4. A cache located by compass azimuth to a cardinal point. Cache is located 3 meters from center of well on compass reading of 90°.

Figure 5-5. Multiple cache located by compass azimuth and intersection of measured lines. Cache is located 3 meters from center of well on compass bearing of 90°. Cache 2 is 12 meters from cache 1 on extension of the line between cache 1 and center of well. Cache 3 is 15 meters northeast of center of well and 11 meters north of cache 2.

THE CONCEALMENT SITE

A site that looks ideal for concealment may be revealed to the enemy for that very reason. Such a site may be equally attractive to a native of an occupied country to hide his valuables. The only real key to the ideal concealment site is careful casing of the area combined with great familiarity with local residents and their customs. The following is a list of likely concealment sites:

- Natural caves and caverns, and abandoned mines and quarries.
- Walls (hidden behind loose bricks or stones or hidden behind a plastered surface).
- Abandoned buildings.
- Infrequently used structures (stadiums and other recreational facilities, and railroad facilities on spur lines).
- Memorial edifices (mausoleums, crypts, monuments).
- Public buildings (museums, churches, libraries).
- Ruins of historical interest.
- Culverts.
- Sewers.
- Cable conduits.

The concealment site must be equally accessible to the person emplacing and the person recovering. However, visits by both persons to certain interior sites may be incompatible with the cover. For instance, a site in a house owned by a relative of the emplacer may be unsuitable because there is no adequate excuse for the recovery person to enter the house if he has no connection with the owner.

The site must remain accessible as long as the cache is needed. If access to a building depends upon a personal relationship with the owner, the death of the owner or the sale of the property might render it inaccessible.

Persons involved in the operation should not be compromised if the cache is discovered on the site. Even if a cache is completely sterile, as every cache should be, the mere fact that it has been placed in a particular site may compromise certain persons. If the cache were discovered by the police, they might suspect the emplacer because it was found in his relative's house.

The site must not be located where potentially hostile persons frequently visit. For instance, a site in a museum is not secure if police guards or curious visitors frequently enter the museum.

To preserve the cached material, the emplacer must ensure the site is physically secure for the preservation of the cached material. For example, most buildings involve a risk that the cache may be destroyed or damaged by fire, especially in wartime. The emplacer should consider all risks and weigh them against the advantages of an interior site.

A custodian may serve to ease access to a building or to guard a cache. However, the use of such a person is inadvisable, as a custodian poses an additional security risk. He may use the contents of the cache for personal profit or reveal its location.

THE BURIAL SITE

In selecting a burial site, consider the following factors along with the basic considerations of suitability and accessibility:

Drainage

This includes the elevation of the site and the type of soil. The importance of good drainage makes a site on high ground preferable unless other factors rule it out. Moisture is one of the greatest natural threats to the contents of a cache. Swamp muck is the most difficult soil to work in. If the site is near a stream or river, ensure that the cache is well above the all-year-high-water mark so that it will not be uncovered if the soil is washed away.

Ground Cover

The types of vegetation at the site will influence the choice. Roots of deciduous trees make digging very difficult. Coniferous trees have less extensive root systems. Also, the presence of coniferous trees usually means that the site is well drained. Does the vegetation show paths or other indications that the site is frequented too much for secure caching? Can the ground cover be easily restored to its normal appearance when burial is completed? Tall grass reveals that it has been trampled, while an overlay of leaves and humus can be replaced easily and will effectively conceal a freshly refilled hole.

Natural Concealment

The vegetation or the surrounding terrain should offer natural concealment for the burial and recovery parties working at the site. Planners should carefully consider seasonal variations in the foliage.

Types of Soil

Sandy loam is ideal because it is easy to dig and drains well. Clay soil should be avoided because it becomes quite sticky in wet weather and in dry weather it may become so hard that it is almost impossible to dig.

Snowfall and Freezing

If the cache must be buried or recovered in winter, data on the normal snowfall, the depth to which the ground freezes in winter, and the usual dates of freezing and thawing will influence the choice of the site. Frozen ground impedes digging and requires additional time for burial and recovery. Snow on the ground is especially hazardous for the burial operation. It is practically impossible to restore the snow over the burial site to its normal appearance unless there is more snowfall or a brisk wind. Also, it is very difficult to ensure that no traces of the operation are left after the snow has melted.

Rocks and Other Subsurface Obstructions

Large obstructions that might prevent use of a particular site can be located to some extent before digging by probing with a rod or stake at the exact spot selected for the cache.

THE SUBMERSION SITE

To be suitable for a submerged cache, a body of water must have certain characteristics. The presence of these characteristics can be determined only by a thorough survey of the site. Their importance will be understood after familiarization with the technicalities of submersion as discussed in Section III, Emplacement. Submersion usually requires a boat, first for reconnoitering, then for emplacement. Thus, the accessibility problems involved in submersion usually narrow down to the availability of a boat and the action cover for using it. If there is no fishing or pleasure boating at the site the cover for this peculiar type boating may be a real problem.

In tropical areas the course of streams or rivers is frequently changed by seasonal rainfall and can cause many problems. Keep this fact in mind when choosing the site and when selecting reference points.

RECOVERY

Since the method for recovering a cache is generally similar to that for emplacing (Section III) a cache, it need not be described in full. However, several important considerations should be stressed in training for a recovery operation.

Practical Exercises

Anyone who is expected to serve as a recovery person should have the experience of actually recovering dummy caches, if field exercises can be arranged securely. It is especially desirable for the recovery person to be able to master the pinpointing techniques. Mastery is best attained by practice in selecting points of emplacement and in drafting, as well as in following instructions.

Equipment

Although the equipment used in recovery is generally the same as that used in emplacement, it is important to include any additional items that may be required in recovery in the cache report. A probe rod may not be essential for emplacement, but it is necessary to have some object roughly the same size as the cache container to fill the cavity left in the ground by removal of a buried cache. Some sort of container or wrapping material may be needed to conceal the recovered cache while it is being carried from the cache site to a safe house. Recovery of a submerged cache may require grappling lines and hooks, especially if it is heavy.

Sketch of the site

If possible, the observer should provide the recovery person with sketches of the cache site and the route to the cache site. If the recovery person must rely exclusively on verbal instructions, as is the case when communications are limited to radio telephone (RT) messages, he should draw a sketch of the site before starting on the recovery operation. He should use all the data in the verbal instructions to make the sketch as realistic as possible. Drawing a sketch will help to clarify any misunderstanding of the instructions. Also, a sketch can be followed more easily than verbal instructions. It may also be helpful for the recovery person to draw a sketch of the route from the immediate reference point to the site. But he should not carry this sketch on him because if he were apprehended the sketch might direct the enemy to the cache.

Preliminary Reconnaissance

Checking the instructions for locating the cache may be advisable, especially when the recovery operation must be performed under stringent enemy controls or when there is no extra time for searching. Careful analysis of the best available map can minimize reconnoitering activity in the vicinity of the cache and thus reduce the danger of arousing suspicion. If recovery must be done at night, the recovery person should find the cache by daylight and place an unnoticeable marker directly over it.

Probe Rod

The recovery person can avoid digging at the wrong spot by using a probe rod before starting to dig. He should push and turn the probe rod into the ground by hand, so that it will not puncture the cache's container. Never pound the probe rod with a hammer.

Procedure for Digging and Refilling the Hole

The recovery procedure is the same as for the burial, except for two points. First, never use a pick for digging the hole because it might puncture the container and damage the cached items. Second, it may be necessary to fill the hole with other objects in addition to soil after the cache is removed. Sometimes it is possible to fill the hole with rocks, sticks, or other readily available objects at the site. If no such objects are found during the preliminary reconnaissance, the recovery person should carry to the site an object roughly the same size as the cache container.

Sterilization of the Site

As with emplacement, the recovery operation must be performed in such a way that no traces of the operation are left. Although sterilizing is not as important for recovery as for emplacement, it should be done as thoroughly as time permits. Evidence that a cache has

been recovered might alert the enemy to clandestine activity in the area and provoke countermeasures.

Section II. Packaging

Packaging usually involves packing the items to be cached, as well as the additional processing in protecting these items from adverse storage conditions. Proper packaging is important because inadequate packaging very likely will render the items unusable. Since special equipment and skilled technicians are needed for best results, packaging should be done at headquarters or a field packaging center whenever possible. However, to familiarize operational personnel with the fundamentals of packaging, so that they can improvise field expedients for emergency use, this section discusses determining factors, steps in packaging, wrapping materials, and criteria for the container.

Determining factors.

The first rule of packaging is that all processing is tailored to fit the specific requirements of each cache.

The method of packaging, as well as the size, shape, and weight of the package is determined by the items to be cached, by the method of caching, and, especially, by the way the cache is recovered and used. For instance, if circumstances require one man to recover the cache by himself, the container should be no larger than a small suitcase, and the total weight of container and contents no more than 30 pounds. Of course, these limits must be exceeded with some equipment, but the need for larger packages should be weighed against the difficulties and risks in handling them. Even if more than one person is available for recovery, the material should be divided whenever possible into separate packages of a size and weight readily portable by one man.

Another very important factor in packaging concerns adverse storage conditions. Any or all of the following conditions may be present: moisture, external pressure, freezing temperatures, and the bacteria and corrosive chemicals found in some soil and water. Animal life may present a hazard; insects and rodents may attack the package. If the cache is concealed in an exterior site, larger animals also may threaten it. Whether the packaging is adequate usually depends upon how carefully the conditions at the site were analyzed in designing the cache. Thus, the method of caching (burial, concealment, or submersion) should be determined before the packaging is done.

It is equally important to consider how long the cache is to be used. Since one seldom knows when a cache will be needed, a sound rule is to design the packaging to withstand adverse storage conditions for at least as long as the normal shelf life of the contents to be cached.

STEPS IN PACKAGING

The exact procedure for packaging depends upon the specific requirements for the cache and upon the packaging equipment available. There are nine steps that are almost always necessary in packaging.

Inspecting

The items to be cached must be inspected immediately before packaging to ensure they are complete, in serviceable condition, and free of all corrosive or contaminative substances.

Cleaning

All corrodible items must be cleaned thoroughly immediately before the final preservative coating is applied. All foreign matter, including any preservative applied before the item was shipped to the field, should be removed completely. Throughout the packaging operation, all contents of the cache should be handled with rubber or freshly cleaned cotton gloves. Special handling is important because even minute particles of human sweat will corrode metallic equipment. Also, any fingerprints on the contents of the cache may enable the enemy to identify those who did the packaging.

Drying

When cleaning is completed, every trace of moisture must be removed from all corrodible items. Methods of drying include: wiping with a highly absorbent cloth, heating or applying desiccant. Usually heating is best, unless the item can be damaged by heat. To dry by heating, the item to be cached should be placed in an oven for at least 3 hours at a temperature of about 110° F. An oven can be improvised from a large metal can or drum. In humid climates, it is especially important to dry the oven thoroughly before using it by preheating it to at least 212° F. Then, insert the equipment to be cached as soon as the oven cools down to about 110° F. If a desiccant is used, it should not touch any metallic surface. Silica gel is a satisfactory desiccant, and it is commonly available.

Coating With a Preservative

Apply a light coat of oil to weapons, tools, and other items with unpainted metallic surfaces. A coat of paint may suffice for other metal items.

Wrapping

When drying and coating are completed, wrap the items to be cached in a suitable material (see paragraph below on Wrapping Materials). The wrapping should be as nearly waterproof as possible. Each item should be wrapped separately, so that one perforation in the wrapping will not expose all items in the cache. The wrapping should fit tightly to each item to eliminate air pockets, and all folds should be sealed with a waterproof substance.

Packing

Several simple rules must be observed when packing items in the container. All moisture must be removed from the interior of the container by heating or applying desiccant. A long-lasting desiccant should be packed inside the container to absorb any residual moisture. If silica gel is used, the required amount can be calculated by using the ratio of 15 kilograms of silica gel to 1 cubic meter of storage space within the container. (This figure is based on two assumptions: the container is completely moisture proof and the contents are slightly moist when inserted.) Therefore, the ratio allows an ample margin for incomplete drying and can be reduced if the drying process is known to be highly effective.

Air pockets should be eliminated as much as possible by tight packing. Thoroughly dried padding should be used liberally to fill air pockets and to protect the contents from shock. Clothing and other items, which will be useful to the recovery party, should be used for padding if possible. Items made of different metals should never touch, since continued contact may cause corrosion through electrolytic action.

Enclosing Instructions for Use of Cached Equipment

Written instructions and diagrams should be included if they facilitate assembly or use of the cached items. Instructions must be written in a language that recovery personnel can understand. The wording should be as simple as possible and unmistakably clear. Diagrams should be self-explanatory since the eventual user may not be able to comprehend written instructions because of language barriers.

Sealing

When packing is completed, the lid of the container must be sealed to make it watertight. Whatever sealing device is used, it is extremely important to ensure that the sealing is done properly because the closing joint is the most vulnerable.

Testing Seal by Submersion

After the container is sealed, it should be tested to make sure that it is watertight. Testing can be done by entirely submerging the container in water and watching for escaping air bubbles. Hot water should be used if possible because hot water will bring out leaks that would not be revealed by a cold water test.

WRAPPING MATERIALS

The most important requirement for wrapping material is that it be moisture proof. Also, it should be self-sealing or adhesive to a sealing material; it should be pliable enough to fit closely, with tight folds; and it should be tough enough to resist tearing and puncturing. Pliability and toughness may be combined by using two wrappings: an inner one that is thin and pliable and an outer one of heavier material. A tough outer wrapping is essential unless the container and the padding are adequate to prevent items from scraping together inside the cache. Five wrapping materials are recommended for field expedients because they often can be obtained locally and used effectively by unskilled personnel.

Aluminum Foil

For use as an inner wrapping, aluminum foil is the best of the widely available materials. It is moisture proof as long as it does not become perforated and provided the folds are adequately sealed. The drawbacks to its use for caching are that the thin foils perforate easily, while the heavy ones (over 2 mils thick) tend to admit moisture through the folds. The heavy-duty grade of aluminum foil generally sold for kitchen use is adequate when used with an outer wrapping. Scrim-backed foil, which is heat-sealable, is widely used commercially to package articles for shipment or storage. Portable heat-sealers that are easy to use are available commercially. Or, sealing can be done with a standard household iron.

Moisture-Resistant Papers

Several brands of commercial wrapping papers are resistant to water and grease. They do not provide lasting protection against moisture when used alone, but they are effective as an inner wrapping to prevent rubber, wax and similar substances from sticking to the items in the cache.

Rubber Repair Gum

This is a self-sealing compound generally used for repairing tires; it makes an excellent outer wrapping. Standard commercial brands come in several thicknesses; 2 millimeters is the most satisfactory for caching. A watertight seal is produced easily by placing two rubber surfaces together and applying pressure manually. The seal should be at least 1/2 inch wide. Since rubber repair gum has a tendency to adhere to some items, an inner wrapping of nonadhesive material must be used with it, and the backing should be left on the rubber material to keep it from sticking to other items in the cache.

Grade C Barrier Material

This is a cloth impregnated with microcrystalline wax that is used extensively when packing for storage or for overseas shipment. Thus, it is generally available, and it has the additional advantage of being self-sealing. Although it is not as effective as rubber repair gum, it may be used as an outer wrapping over aluminum foil to prevent perforation of the foil. Used without an inner wrapping, three layers of *grade C barrier material* may keep the contents dry for as long as three months, but it is highly vulnerable to insects and rodents. Also, the

wax wrapping has a low melting point and will adhere to many items, so it should not be used without an inner wrapping except in emergencies.

Wax Coating

If no wrapping material is available, an outer coating of microcrystalline wax, paraffin or a similar waxy substance can be used to protect the contents against moisture. It will not provide protection against insects and rodents. The package should be hot-dipped in the waxy substance, or the wax can be heated to molten form and applied with a brush.

THE CONTAINER

The outer container serves to protect the contents from shock, moisture and other natural hazards to which the cache may be exposed.

Criteria for the container

The ideal container should be:

- Completely watertight and airtight after sealing.
- Noiseless when handled and its handles should not rattle against the body of the container.
- Resistant to shock and abrasion.
- Able to withstand crushing pressure.
- Lightweight in construction.
- Able to withstand rodents, insects, and bacteria.
- Equipped with a sealing device that can be closed and reopened easily and repeatedly.
- Capable of withstanding highly acidic or alkaline soil or water.

The Standard Stainless Steel Container

The standard stainless steel container comes in several sizes. Since the stainless steel container is more satisfactory than any that could be improvised in the field, it should be used whenever possible. Ideally, it should be packed at headquarters or at a field packaging center. If the items to be cached must be obtained locally, it is still advisable to use the stainless steel container because its high resistance to moisture eliminates the need for an outer wrapping. Packers should, however, use a single wrapping even with the stainless steel container to protect the contents from any residual moisture that may be present in the container when it is sealed.

The Field Expedient Container

Obviously the ideal container cannot be improvised in the field, but the standard military and commercial containers discussed below can meet caching requirements if they are adapted with care and resourcefulness. First, a container must be sufficiently sturdy to remain unpunctured and retain its shape through whatever rough handling or crushing pressure it may encounter. (Even a slight warping may cause a joint around the lid to leak.) Second, if the lid is not already watertight and airtight, packers can make it so by improvising a sealing device. The most common type sealing device includes a rubber-composition gasket or lining and a sharp metal rim that is pressed against the gasket by a clamp or spring. The gasket must be tough and the rim must be sharp enough to indent the gasket without cutting it. Another common sealing device is a threaded lid. Its effectiveness can be increased by applying heavy grease to the threads. (Metallic solder should not be used for sealing because it corrodes metal surfaces when exposed to moisture.) Whenever any non-stainless metal container is used, it is important to apply several coats of high-quality paint to all exterior surfaces.

Instrument containers. Ordinarily, aircraft and other precision instruments are shipped in steel containers with a waterproof sealing device. The standard instrument containers range from 1/2 gallon to 10 gallon sizes. If one of suitable size can be found, only minimum modifications may be needed. In the most common type of instrument container, the only weak point is the nut and bolt that tightens the locking band around the lid. These should be replaced with a stainless steel nut and bolt.

Ammunition boxes. Several types and sizes of steel ammunition boxes that have a rubber-gasket closing device are satisfactory for buried caches. An advantage of using ammunition boxes as cache containers is that they are usually available at a military depot.

Steel drums. A caching container of suitable size may be found among the commercially used steel drums for shipping oil, grease, nails, soap, and other products. The most common types, however, lack an adequate sealing device, so a waterproof material should be used around the lid. Fully removable head drums with lock-ring closures generally give a satisfactory seal.

Glass jars. The advantage of using glass is that it is waterproof and does not allow chemicals, bacteria and insects to pass through it. Although glass is highly vulnerable to shock, glass jars of a sturdy quality can withstand the crushing pressure normally encountered in caching. However, none of the available glass containers have an adequate sealing device for the joint around the lid. The standard commercial canning jar with a spring clamp and rubber washer is watertight, but the metal clamp is vulnerable to corrosion. Therefore, a glass jar with a spring clamp and a rubber washer is an adequate expedient for short-term caching of small items, but it should not be relied upon to resist moisture for more than a year.

Paint cans. Standard cans with reusable lids require a waterproof adhesive around the lids. It is especially important to apply several coats of paint to the exterior of standard commercial cans because the metal in these cans is not as heavy as that in metal drums. Even when the exterior is thoroughly painted, paint cans probably will not resist moisture for more than a few months.

Section III. Methods of Emplacement

Since burial is the most frequently used method of emplacement, this section describes first the complete procedure for burial, followed by a discussion of emplacement procedures peculiar to submersion and concealment. The last area discussed is the preparation of the cache report — a vital part of a caching operation.

BURIAL

When planners have designed a cache and selected the items for caching, they must carefully work out every step of the burial operation in advance.

Horizontal and Vertical Caches

Ordinarily, the hole for a buried cache is vertical (the hole is dug straight down from the surface (Figure 5-6)). Sometimes a horizontal

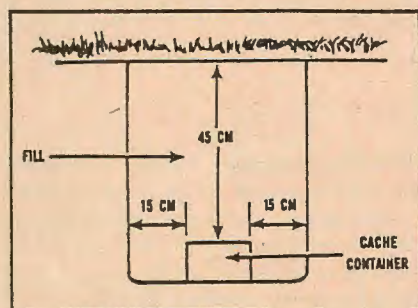


Figure 5-6 Vertical hole for a buried cache.

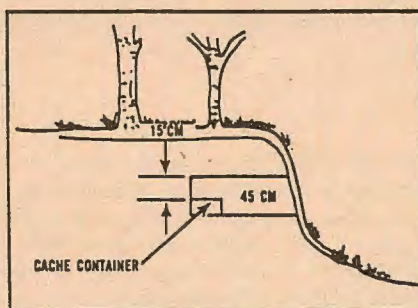


Figure 5-7 Horizontal hole for a buried cache.

cache, with the hole dug into the side of a steep hill or bank, provides a workable solution when a suitable site on level or slightly sloping ground is not available (Figure 5-7). A horizontal cache may provide better drainage in areas of heavy rainfall, but is more likely to be exposed by soil erosion and more difficult to refill and restore to normal appearance.

Dimensions of the Hole

The exact dimensions of the hole, either vertical or horizontal, depend on the size and shape of the cache container. As a general rule, ensure that the hole is large enough for the

container to be inserted easily. The horizontal dimensions of the hole should be about 30 centimeters longer and wider than the container. Most importantly, it should be deep enough to permit covering the container with soil to about 45 centimeters. This figure is recommended for normal usage because a more shallow burial risks exposure of the cache through soil erosion or inadvertent uncovering by normal indigenous activity. A deeper hole makes probing for recovery more difficult and unnecessarily prolongs the time required for burial and recovery.

Excavation Shoring

If there is a risk that the surrounding soil will cave in during excavation, boards or bags filled with subsoil may be used to shore the sides of the hole. Permanent shoring may be needed to protect an improvised container from pressure or shock.

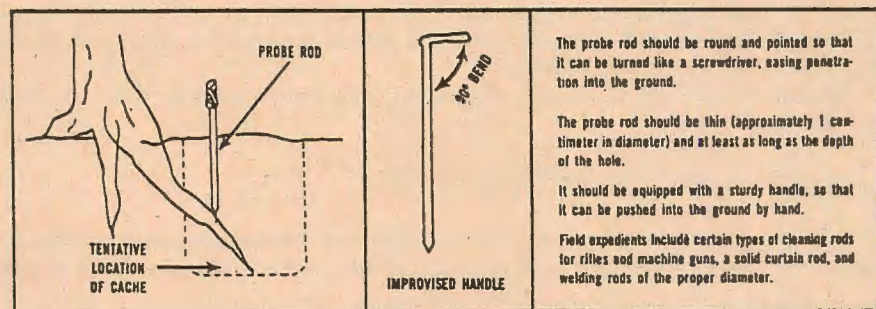


Figure 5-8. Using a probe rod.

Equipment

The following items of equipment may be helpful or indispensable in burying a cache, depending upon the conditions at the site:

- Measuring instruments (a wire or metal tape and compass) for pinpointing the site.
- Paper and pencil for recording the measurements.
- A probe rod for locating rocks, large roots, or other obstacles in the subsoil (Figure 5-8).
- Two ground sheets on which to place sod and loose soil. An article of clothing may be used for a small excavation if nothing else is available.
- Sacks (sandbags, flour sacks) for holding subsoil.
- A spade or pickax, if the ground is too hard for spading.
- A hatchet for cutting roots.
- A crowbar for prying rocks.
- A flashlight or lamp if burial is to be done at night.

The Burial Party

Aside from locating, digging, and refilling the hole, the most important factors in this part of the emplacement operation may be expressed with one word: *Personnel*. Since it is almost impossible to prevent every member of the burial party from knowing the location of the cache, each member is a prime security problem as long as the cache remains intact. Thus, planners must keep the burial party as small as possible and select each member with utmost care. Once selected, each member must have adequate cover to explain his absence

from home or work during the operation, his trip to and from the site, and his possession of whatever equipment cannot be concealed on the way. Transportation for the burial party may be a problem, depending on the number of persons, how far they must go, and what equipment they must take. When planners have worked out all details of the operation, they must brief every member of the burial party on exactly what he is to do from start to finish.

The Operational Schedule

The final step in planning the emplacement operation is to make a schedule to set the date, time, and place for every step of the operation that requires advance coordination. The schedule will depend mainly on the circumstances, but to be practical it must include a realistic estimate of how long it will take to complete the burial. Here generalizations are worthless, and the only sure guide is actual experience under similar conditions. Planners should consider three things with respect to scheduling.

A careful burial job probably will take longer than most novices will expect. Therefore, if circumstances require a tight schedule, a dry run or test exercise before taking the package to the site may be advisable.

Unless the site is exceptionally well concealed or isolated, night burial probably will be required to avoid detection. Because of the difficulties of working in the dark, a nighttime practice exercise is especially advisable.

The schedule should permit waiting for advantageous weather conditions. The difficulties of snow have already been mentioned. Rainy weather increases the problems of digging and complicates the cover story. If the burial is to be done at night, a moonless or a heavy overcast night is desirable.

Site Approach

Regardless of how effective the cover of actions during the trip to the cache site, the immediate approach must be completely unobserved to avoid detection of the burial. To reduce the risk of the party being observed, planners must carefully select the point where the burial party *disappears*, perhaps by turning off a road into woods. They should as carefully select the *reappearance* point. In addition, the return trip should be by a different route. The burial party should strictly observe the rule for concealed movement. The party should proceed cautiously and silently along a route that makes the best use of natural concealment. Concealed movement requires foresight, with special attention to using natural concealment while reconnoitering the route and to preventing rattles when preparing the package and contents.

Security Measures at the Site

The burial party must maintain maximum vigilance at the cache site, since detection can be disastrous. The time spent at the site is the most critical.

At least one lookout should be on guard constantly. If one man must do the burial by himself, he should pause frequently to look and listen.

The burial party should use flashlights or lanterns as little as possible, and should take special care to mask the glare.

Planning should include emergency actions in case the burial party is interrupted. The party should be so thoroughly briefed that it will respond instantly to any sign of danger.

Planners should also consider the various escape routes and whether the party will attempt to retain the package or conceal it along the escape route.

Steps in Digging and Refilling

Although procedures will vary slightly with the design of the cache, persons involved in caching operations must never overlook certain basic steps. The whole procedure is designed to restore the site to normal as far as possible as shown in Figure 5-9.

Site Sterilization

When the hole is refilled, make a special effort to ensure that the site is left sterile — restored to normal in every way, with no clues left to indicate burial or the burial party's visit to the vicinity. Since sterilization is most important for the security of the operation, the schedule should allow ample time to complete these final steps in an unhurried, thorough manner.

Dispose of any excess soil far enough away from the site to avoid attracting attention to the site. Flushing the excess soil into a stream is the ideal solution.

Check all tools and equipment against a checklist to ensure that nothing is left behind. This should include all personal items that may drop from pockets. To keep this risk to a minimum, members of the burial party should carry nothing on their persons except the essentials for doing the job and covering their actions.

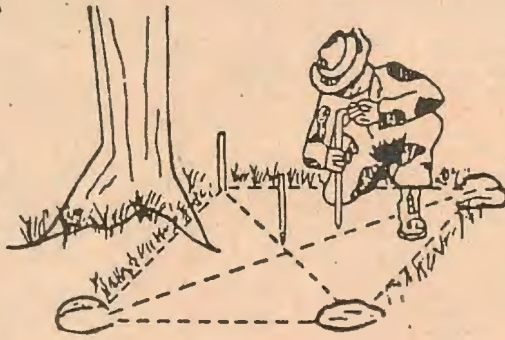
Make a final inspection of the site for any traces of the burial. Because this step is more difficult on a dark night, use of a carefully prepared checklist is essential. With a night burial, returning to the site in the daytime to inspect it for telltale evidence may be advisable, if this can be done safely.

SUBMERSION

Emplacing a submerged cache always involves two basic steps: weighting the container to keep it from floating to the surface and mooring it to keep it in place.

Container Weighting and Mooring

Ordinarily, container weights rest on the bottom of the lake or river and function as anchors, and the mooring connect the anchors to the container. The moorings must also serve a second function, that is to provide a handle for pulling the cache to the surface when it is

A

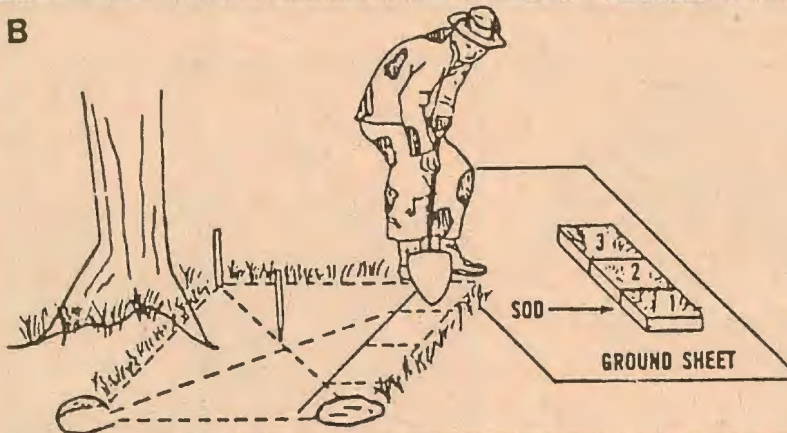
Mark the exact spot designated in the instructions for locating the cache.

Mark the length and width of the hole, with the final pinpoint in the center.

Probe the whole area designated for the hole by repeatedly inserting a probe rod in the ground to the depth at which the bottom of the container will be placed.

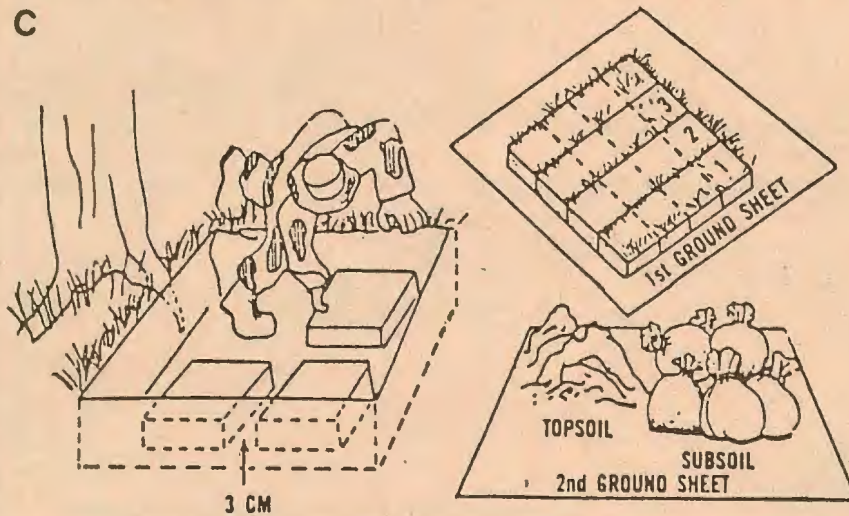
Ideally, probing should be done during the preliminary reconnaissance. If it cannot be done then, thorough probing before starting to dig is highly advisable.

An obstacle discovered before digging usually can be avoided by a slight change in the location of the cache. But a large rock that is encountered when digging is almost complete may disrupt a tight operational schedule.

B

Place a ground sheet at the edge of the hole and anchor it in place.

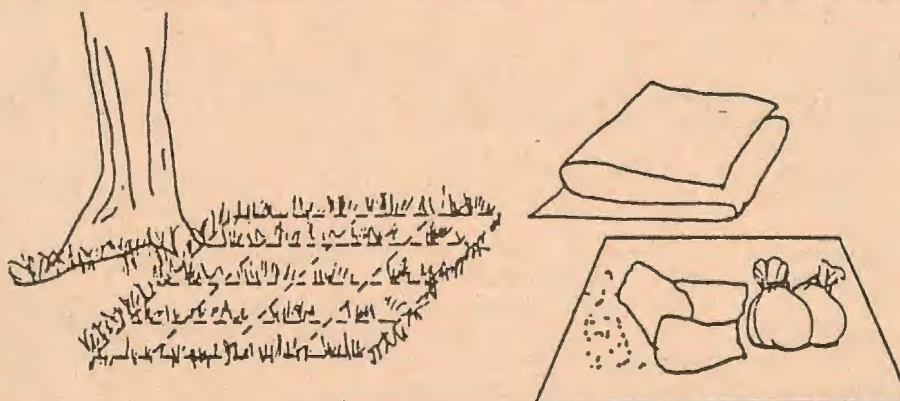
Remove the sod, taking care to cut it into rectangular pieces that can be replaced after the hole is filled. Place the sod on the ground sheet, keeping the pieces in their original pattern.

C

Dig the hole, keeping the topsoil separate from the subsoil. This should be done by piling the topsoil on a second ground sheet and putting the subsoil in sacks. To avoid leakage of subsoil onto the ground near the cache, place the filled sacks on the ground sheet. If sacks are not available, the subsoil can be placed on a separate section of the ground sheet.

Check the dimensions of the hole, making certain that the depth is exactly as planned.

Place the package in the hole. If more than one package is placed on the same level, leave a gap of approximately 3 centimeters between them. This gap prevents their becoming wedged together and permits easier removal.

D

Refill the hole, tamping the soil firmly and frequently as it is replaced. Leave enough room at the top of the hole to replace all topsoil down to its normal depth.

Replace the sod, taking special care to restore it to its normal appearance.

Figure 5-9. Digging and refilling the hole.

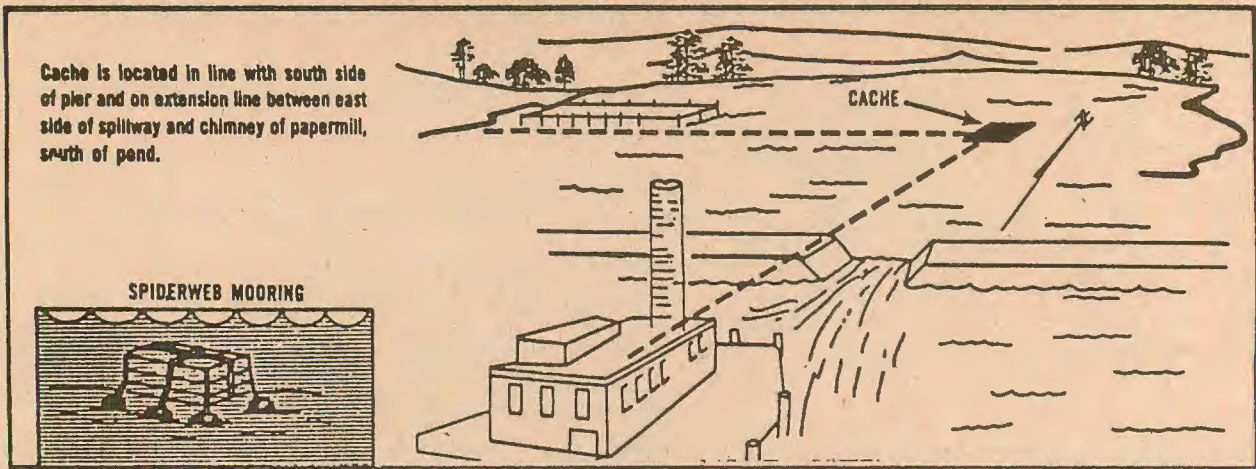


Figure 5-10. Spiderweb mooring.

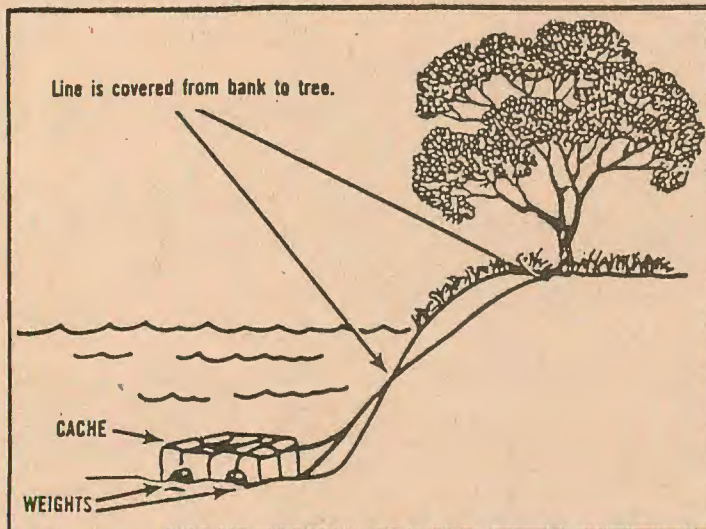


Figure 5-11. Line-to-shore mooring.

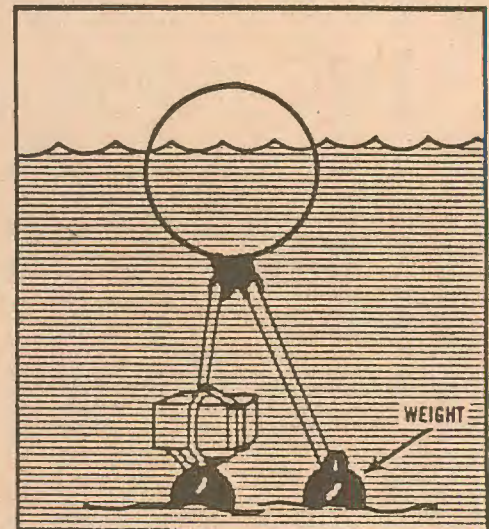


Figure 5-12. Buoy mooring.

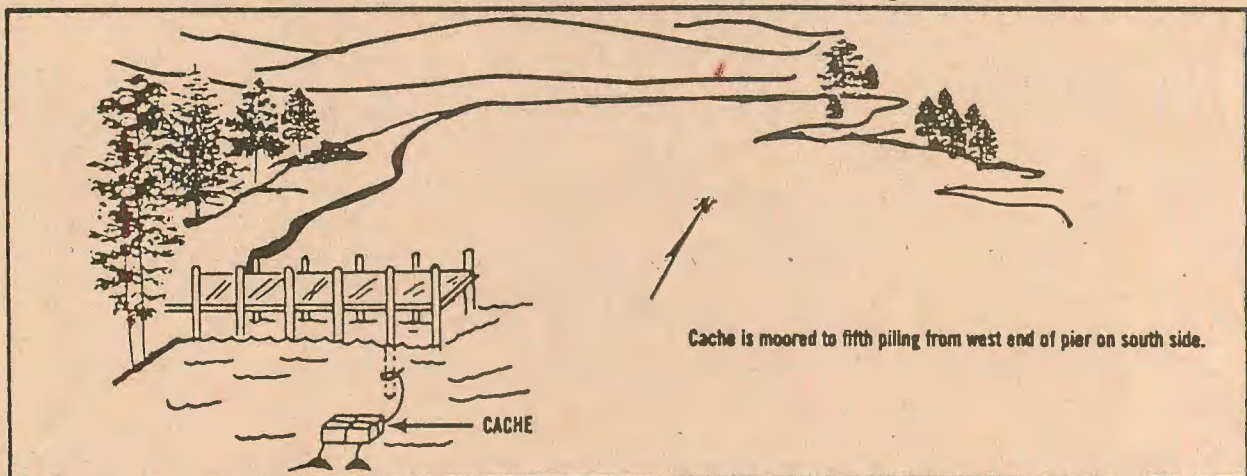


Figure 5-13. Structural mooring.

recovered. If the moorings are not accessible for recovery, another line must extend from the cache to a fixed, accessible object in the water or on shore. There are four types of moorings.

Spider Web Mooring. The container is attached to several mooring cables that radiate to anchors placed around it to form a web. The container must be buoyant so that it lifts the cables far enough off the bottom to be readily secured by grappling. The site must be located exactly at the time of emplacement by visual sightings to fixed landmarks in the water or along the shore, using several FRPs to establish a point where two sighted lines intersect. For example, in Figure 5-10, the cache is located in line with the south side of the pier and on the extension line between the east side of the spill way and chimney of the paper mill, south of the pond. For recovery, the site is located by taking sightings on the reference points, when a mooring cable is engaged by dragging the bottom or diving. This method of mooring is most difficult for recovery. It can be used only where the bottom is smooth and firm enough for dragging, or where the water is not too deep, cold, or murky for diving. **Line-to-shore mooring.** A line is run from the weighted container to an immovable object along the shore (Figure 5-11). The section of the line that extends from the shore to the container must be buried in the ground or otherwise well concealed.

Buoy mooring. A line is run from the weighted container to a buoy or other fixed, floating marker, and fastened well below the waterline (Figure 5-12). This method is secure only as long as the buoy is left in place. Buoys are generally inspected and repainted every six months or so. The inspection schedule should be determined before a buoy is used.

Structural mooring. A line for retrieving the weighted container is run to a bridge pier or other solid structure in the water. This line must be fastened well below the low-water mark. In Figure 5-11, the cache is moored to the fifth piling from the west end of the pier on the south side.

Essential Data for Submersion

Whatever method of mooring is used, planners must carefully consider certain data before designing a submerged cache. The cache very likely will be lost if any of the following critical factors are overlooked:

Buoyancy. Many containers are buoyant even when filled, so the container must be weighted sufficiently to submerge it and keep it in place. If the contents do not provide enough weight, emplacers must make up the balance by attaching a weight to the container. The approximate weight needed to attain zero buoyancy is shown in Figure 5-14. This figure applies to several sizes of stainless steel containers.

The weighting required for any container can be calculated theoretically if the displacement of the container and the gross weight of the container plus its contents are known. This calculation may be useful for designing an anchor, but it should not be relied upon for actual emplacement. To avoid hurried improvisation during emplacement, emplacers should always test the buoyancy in advance by actually submerging the weighted container. This test determines only that a submerged cache will not float to the surface. Additional weighting may be required to keep it from drifting along the bottom. As a general rule, the additional weight should be a least one-tenth of the gross weight required to make the container sink; more weight is advisable if strong currents are present

Submersion depth. Planners must first determine the depth which the container is to be submerged to calculate the water pressure that the container must withstand. The greater the depth, the greater the danger that the container will be crushed by water pressure. For instance, the standard stainless steel burial container will buckle at a depth of approximately 4.3 meters. The difficulty of waterproofing also increases with depth. Thus, the container should not be submerged any deeper than necessary to avoid detection. As a general rule, 2.2 meters is the maximum advisable depth for caching. If seasonal or tidal variations in the water level require deeper submersion, the container should be tested by actual submersion to the maximum depth it must withstand.

Depth of the water. Emplacers must measure accurately the depth of the water at the point where the cache is to be placed. This will be the submersion depth if the cache is designed so that the container rests on the bottom of the lake or river. The container may be suspended some distance above the bottom, but the depth of the water must be known to determine the length of moorings connecting the containers to the anchors.

High- and low-water marks. Any tidal or seasonal changes in the depth of the water should be estimated as accurately as possible. Emplacers must consider the low-water mark to ensure that low water will not leave the cache exposed. The high-water point also should be considered to ensure that the increased depth will not crush the container or prevent recovery.

Type of bottom. Emplacers should probe as thoroughly as possible the bed of the lake or river in the vicinity of the cache. If the bottom is soft and silty, the cache may sink into the muck, become covered with sediment, or drift out of place. If the bottom is rocky or covered with debris, the mooring may become snagged. Any of these conditions may make recovery very difficult.

Water motion. Emplacers should consider tides, currents, and waves because any water motion will put additional strain on the moorings of the cache. Moorings must be strong enough to withstand the greatest possible strain. If the water motion tends to rock the cache, emplacers must take special care to prevent the moorings from rubbing and fraying.

Clearness of the water. When deciding how deep to submerge the cache, emplacers must first determine how far the cache can be seen through the water. If the water is clear, the cache may need to be camouflaged by painting the container to match the bottom. (Always paint shiny metallic fixtures a dull color.) Very murky water makes recovery by divers more difficult.

Water temperature. Planners must consider seasonal changes in the temperature of the water. Recovery may be impossible in the winter if the water freezes. The dates when the lake or river usually freezes and thaws should be determined as accurately as possible.

Salt water. Since seawater is much more corrosive than fresh water, tidal estuaries and lagoons should not be used for caching. The only exception is the maritime resupply operation, where equipment may be submerged temporarily along the seacoast until it can be recovered by a shore party.

CONCEALMENT

There are many different ways to conceal a cache in natural or ready-made hiding places. For instance, if a caching party were hiding weapons and ammunition in a cave, relying entirely on natural concealment, the emplacement operation would be reduced to simply locating the site. No tools would be needed except paper, pencil and a flashlight. On the other hand, if the party were sealing a packet of jewels in a brick wall, a skilled mason would be needed, his kit of tools, and a supply of mortar expertly mixed to match the original brick wall.

When planning for concealment, planners must know the local residents and their customs. During the actual emplacement, the caching party must ensure the operation is not observed. The final sterilization of the site is especially important, since a concealment site is usually open to frequent observation.

CACHING COMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT

As a general rule, all equipment for a particular purpose (demolitions, survival) should be included in one container. Some equipment, however, is so sensitive from a security standpoint that it should be packed in several containers and cached in different locations to minimize the danger of discovery by the enemy. This is particularly true of communications equipment, since under some circumstances anyone who acquires a whole RT set with a signal plan and cryptographic material would be able to play the set back. An especially dangerous type of penetration would result. In the face of this danger, the signal plan and the cryptographic material must never be placed in the same container. Ideally a communications kit should be distributed among three containers and cached in different locations. If three containers are used, the distribution may be as follows:

- Container #1: The RT set, including the crystals.
- Container #2: The signal plan and operational supplies for the RT operator such as currency, barter items, and small arms.
- Container #3: The cryptographic material.

When several containers are used for one set of equipment, they must be placed far enough apart so that if one is discovered, the others will not be detected in the immediate vicinity. On the other hand, they should be located close enough together so that they can be recovered conveniently in one operation. The distance between containers will depend on the particular situation, but ordinarily they should be at least 10 meters apart. One final reference point ordinarily is used for a multiple cache. (See Figure 5-4, which illustrates the use of one round FRP and a compass azimuth to pinpoint a multiple cache, and Figure 5-5, which shows how three corners on a rectangular FRP can pinpoint a multiple cache without using a compass azimuth.) The caching party should be careful to avoid placing multiple caches in a repeated pattern. Discovery of one multiple cache would give the opposition a guide for probing others placed in a similar pattern.

CACHING MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

A feasibility study must be performed to determine the need for the caching of medical supplies. The purpose of caches is to store excess medical supplies, to maintain mobility, and deny access to the enemy. Also caching large stockpiles of medical supplies allows repositioning vital supplies in anticipation of future planned operations.

THE CACHE REPORT

The final step, which is vital in every emplacement operation, is the preparation of a cache report. This report records the essential data for recovery. The cache report must provide all the information that someone unfamiliar with the locality needs to find his way to the site, recover the cache, and return safely. The report format follows.

THE TWELVE-POINT CACHE REPORT

1. Type of Cache
2. Method of Caching
3. Contents
4. Description of Containers
5. General Area
6. Immediate Area
7. Cache Location
8. Emplacement Details
9. Operational Data and Remarks
10. Dates of Emplacement and Duration of the Cache
11. Sketches and Diagrams
12. Radio Message for Recovery

Container dimensions (inches)	Empty container weight (pounds)	Approximate weight that must be added to empty container weight to attain zero buoyancy (pounds)
7x9x8 1/2	5	15
7x9x16 1/2	8	31
7x9x40	16	77
7x9x45	17 1/2	88
7x9x50	19	97

Content

The most important parts of the cache report must include instructions for finding and recovering the cache. It should also include any other information that will ease planning the recover operation. Since the details will depend upon the situation and the particular needs of each organization, the exact format of the report cannot be prescribed. The Twelve-Point Cache Report is intended merely to point out the minimum essential data. Whatever format is used, the importance of attention to detail cannot be overemphasized. A careless error or omission in the cache report may prevent recovery of the cache when it is needed.

Procedure

The observer should collect as much data as possible during the personal reconnaissance to assist in selecting a site and planning emplacement and recovery operations. Drafting the cache report before emplacement is also advisable. Following these procedures will reveal the omissions. Then the missing data can be obtained at the site. If this procedure is followed, the preparation of the final cache report will be reduced to an after-action check. This check ensures that the cache actually was placed precisely where planned and that all other descriptive details are accurate. Although this ideal may seldom be realized, two procedures always should be followed:

- The caching party should complete the final cache report as soon as possible after emplacement, as details are fresh in mind.
- Someone who has not visited the site should check the instructions by using them to lead the party to the site. When no such person is available, someone should visit the site shortly after emplacement, provided he can do so securely. If the cache has been emplaced at night, a visit to the site in daylight may also provide an opportunity to check on the sterilization of the site.

ChinaSports



Type 54-1 TOKAREV
 CALIBERS: .38 Super, or 7.62x25 mm
 ACTION: SemiAuto, Sgl
 LENGTH: 7.7 inches
 BARREL: 4.5 inches
 WEIGHT: 29 oz.
 MAGAZINE: 8 Rds.
 SIGHTS: Fixed



Change caliber just by switching barrel and recoil spring. Kit available for those who already own a Tokarev.

TYPE 77B
 CALIBER: 9x19 mm
 ACTION: Single
 LENGTH: 7.5 inches
 BARREL: 5 inches
 WEIGHT: 34 oz.
 MAGAZINE: 8 Rds.
 SIGHTS: Adj. rear



One hand cocking. Gas recoil for performance with different loads, dirt, weather.

TYPE 59 MAKAROV
 CALIBER: 9x18 mm or .380 ACP
 ACTION: Single & Dbl
 LENGTH: 6.3 inches
 BARREL: 3.5 inches
 WEIGHT: 1.5 lbs.
 MAGAZINE: 8 Rds.
 SIGHTS: Fixed & Adj.

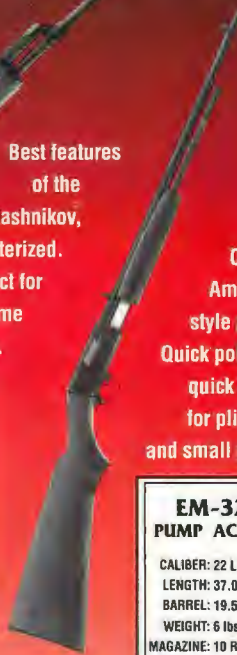


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Best features of the Kalashnikov, sporterized. Perfect for small game to deer.

NHM-90 SPORT AK
 CALIBER: 7.62x39
 LENGTH: 35.25 inches
 BARREL: 16.34 inches
 WEIGHT: 9 lbs.
 MAGAZINE: 5 Rds.



Classic American style pump. Quick pointing, quick firing, for plinking, and small game.

EM-321 PUMP ACTION
 CALIBER: .22 Long Rifle
 LENGTH: 37.0 inches
 BARREL: 19.5 inches
 WEIGHT: 6 lbs.
 MAGAZINE: 10 Rds.



Lines of the larger caliber rifles plus unique double mag holder in stock.

EM-332 BOLT ACTION
 CALIBER: .22 Long Rifle
 LENGTH: 41.5 inches
 BARREL: 18.5 inches
 WEIGHT: 4.5 lbs.
 MAGAZINE: 5 Rds.



.45 ACP
 TYPE: .45 ACP
 BULLET: 230 gr FMJ copper jacket lead core
 CASE: Brass reloadable
 PRIMER: Boxer noncorrosive
 VELOCITY: 830 FPS
 MUZZLE ENERGY: 326 F.P.
 PACKAGING: 50 Rds/box
 1000 Rds/case

The classic 45 ammo. Priced right for target and sport shooting. Powerful defense.



9 Para
 TYPE: 9x19mm Luger
 BULLET: 124 gr FMJ copper jacket lead core
 CASE: Brass reloadable
 PRIMER: Boxer noncorrosive
 VELOCITY: 1130 FPS
 MUZZLE ENERGY: 426 F.P.
 PACKAGING: 50 Rds/box
 2000 Rds/case

Accurate, high velocity ammo for targets, defense, and small game.



7.62x39
 TYPE: 7.62x39mm Russian
 BULLET: 122 gr FMJ copper jacket lead core
 CASE: Steel nonreloadable
 PRIMER: Berdan noncorrosive
 VELOCITY: 2350 FPS
 MUZZLE ENERGY: 1485 F.P.
 PACKAGING: 20 Rds/box
 1200 Rds/case

Growing popular in U.S. with collectors, small game hunters. New ammo.



.223
 TYPE: .223 Remington
 BULLET: 55gr FMJ copper jacket lead core
 CASE: Brass reloadable
 PRIMER: Boxer noncorrosive
 VELOCITY: 3250 FPS
 MUZZLE ENERGY: 1375 F.P.
 PACKAGING: 20 Rds/box
 1600 Rds/case

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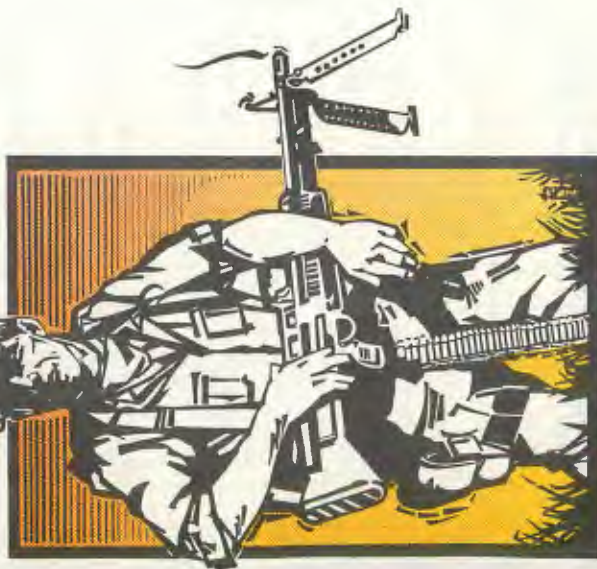
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All responsible firearms owners practice basic firearms safety.

Thoroughly read and understand the users manual that is supplied with your firearm. Never use any firearm unless you can completely understand its operation and safety features.

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